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THE WORKS  
OF  
ALFRED LORD TENNYSON









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# BALLADS

AND OTHER POEMS

BY

ALFRED  
LORD TENNYSON

POET LAUREATE

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## CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE LOVER'S TALE . . . . .	I
BALLADS AND OTHER POEMS—	
DEDICATION . . . . .	67
THE FIRST QUARREL . . . . .	69
RIZPAH . . . . .	78
THE NORTHERN COBBLER . . . . .	86
THE REVENGE: A BALLAD OF THE FLEET . . . . .	96
THE SISTERS . . . . .	105
THE VILLAGE WIFE; OR, THE ENTAIL . . . . .	118
IN THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL: EMMIE . . . . .	129
DEDICATORY POEM TO THE PRINCESS ALICE . . . . .	136
THE DEFENCE OF LUCKNOW . . . . .	138
SIR JOHN OLDCASTLE, LORD COBHAM . . . . .	147
COLUMBUS . . . . .	156
THE VOYAGE OF MAELDUNE . . . . .	166
DE PROFUNDIS—	
THE TWO GREETINGS . . . . .	177
THE HUMAN CRY . . . . .	180

## SONNETS—

	PAGE
PREFATORY SONNET TO THE 'NINETEENTH CENTURY' . . . . .	181
TO THE REV. W. H. BROOKFIELD . . . . .	182
MONTENEGRO . . . . .	183
TO VICTOR HUGO . . . . .	184

## TRANSLATIONS, ETC.—

BATTLE OF BRUNANBURH . . . . .	187
ACHILLES OVER THE TRENCH . . . . .	194
TO PRINCESS FREDERICA ON HER MARRIAGE . . . . .	196
SIR JOHN FRANKLIN . . . . .	197
TO DANTE . . . . .	198

## TIRESIAS AND OTHER POEMS—

TO E. FITZGERALD . . . . .	201
TIRESIAS . . . . .	204
THE WRECK . . . . .	213
DESPAIR . . . . .	226
THE ANCIENT SAGE . . . . .	237
THE FLIGHT . . . . .	249
TOMORROW . . . . .	259
THE SPINSTER'S SWEET-ARTS . . . . .	268
LOCKSLEY HALL SIXTY YEARS AFTER . . . . .	279
PROLOGUE TO GENERAL HAMLEY . . . . .	305
THE CHARGE OF THE HEAVY BRIGADE AT BALACLAVA . . . . .	307

TIRESIAS AND OTHER POEMS, *continued*—

	PAGE
EPILOGUE . . . . .	311
TO VIRGIL . . . . .	315
THE DEAD PROPHET . . . . .	318
EARLY SPRING . . . . .	324
PREFATORY POEM TO MY BROTHER'S SONNETS .	327
'FRATER AVE ATQUE VALE' . . . . .	329
HELEN'S TOWER . . . . .	330
EPITAPH ON LORD STRATFORD DE REDCLIFFE .	331
EPITAPH ON GENERAL GORDON . . . . .	332
EPITAPH ON CAXTON . . . . .	333
TO THE DUKE OF ARGYLL . . . . .	334
HANDS ALL ROUND . . . . .	335
FREEDOM . . . . .	337
TO H.R.H. PRINCESS BEATRICE . . . . .	340
THE FLEET . . . . .	342
OPENING OF THE INDIAN AND COLONIAL EXHIBI- TION BY THE QUEEN . . . . .	345
POETS AND THEIR BIBLIOGRAPHIES . . . . .	348





THE  
LOVER'S TALE.

VOL. VI.

Ⓒ

B

THE original Preface to 'The Lover's Tale' states that it was composed in my nineteenth year. Two only of the three parts then written were printed, when, feeling the imperfection of the poem, I withdrew it from the press. One of my friends however who, boylike, admired the boy's work, distributed among our common associates of that hour some copies of these two parts, without my knowledge, without the omissions and amendments which I had in contemplation, and marred by the many misprints of the compositor. Seeing that these two parts have of late been mercilessly pirated, and that what I had deemed scarce worthy to live is not allowed to die, may I not be pardoned if I suffer the whole poem at last to come into the light—accompanied with a reprint of the sequel—a work of my mature life—'The Golden Supper'?

*May 1879.*

## ARGUMENT.

JULIAN, whose cousin and foster-sister, Camilla, has been wedded to his friend and rival, Lionel, endeavours to narrate the story of his own love for her, and the strange sequel. He speaks (in Parts II. and III.) of having been haunted by visions and the sound of bells, tolling for a funeral, and at last ringing for a marriage ; but he breaks away, overcome, as he approaches the Event, and a witness to it completes the tale.

### I.

HERE far away, seen from the topmost cliff,  
Filling with purple gloom the vacancies  
Between the tufted hills, the sloping seas  
Hung in mid-heaven, and half-way down rare sails,  
White as white clouds, floated from sky to sky.  
Oh ! pleasant breast of waters, quiet bay,  
Like to a quiet mind in the loud world,  
Where the chafed breakers of the outer sea  
Sank powerless, as anger falls aside  
And withers on the breast of peaceful love ;  
Thou didst receive the growth of pines that fledged  
The hills that watch'd thee, as Love watcheth Love,

In thine own essence, and delight thyself  
To make it wholly thine on sunny days.  
Keep thou thy name of ' Lover's Bay.' Sec, sirs,  
Even now the Goddess of the Past, that takes  
The heart, and sometimes touches but one string  
That quivers, and is silent, and sometimes  
Sweeps suddenly all its half-moulder'd chords  
To some old melody, begins to play  
That air which pleased her first. I feel thy  
breath ;

I come, great Mistress of the ear and eye :  
Thy breath is of the pinewood ; and tho' years  
Have hollow'd out a deep and stormy strait  
Betwixt the native land of Love and me,  
Breathe but a little on me, and the sail  
Will draw me to the rising of the sun,  
The lucid chambers of the morning star,  
And East of Life.

Permit me, friend, I prythee,  
To pass my hand across my brows, and muse  
On those dear hills, that never more will meet  
The sight that throbs and aches beneath my touch,  
As tho' there beat a heart in either eye ;  
For when the outer lights are darken'd thus,  
The memory's vision hath a keener edge.  
It grows upon me now—the semicircle



Of dark-blue waters and the narrow fringe  
Of curving beach—its wreaths of dripping green—  
Its pale pink shells—the summerhouse aloft  
That open'd on the pines with doors of glass,  
A mountain nest—the pleasure-boat that rock'd,  
Light-green with its own shadow, keel to keel,  
Upon the dappled dimplings of the wave,  
That blanch'd upon its side.

O Love, O Hope !

They come, they crowd upon me all at once—  
Moved from the cloud of unforgotten things,  
That sometimes on the horizon of the mind  
Lies folded, often sweeps athwart in storm—  
Flash upon flash they lighten thro' me—days  
Of dewy dawning and the amber eves  
When thou and I, Camilla, thou and I  
Were borne about the bay or safely moor'd  
Beneath a low-brow'd cavern, where the tide  
Plash'd, sapping its worn ribs ; and all without  
The slowly-ridging rollers on the cliffs  
Clash'd, calling to each other, and thro' the arch  
Down those loud waters, like a setting star,  
Mixt with the gorgeous west the lighthouse shone,  
And silver-smiling Venus ere she fell  
Would often loiter in her balmy blue,  
To crown it with herself.

Here, too, my love  
Waver'd at anchor with me, when day hung  
From his mid-dome in Heaven's airy halls ;  
Gleams of the water-circles as they broke,  
Flicker'd like doubtful smiles about her lips,  
Quiver'd a flying glory on her hair,  
Leapt like a passing thought across her eyes ;  
And mine with one that will not pass, till earth  
And heaven pass too, dwelt on my heaven, a face  
Most starry-fair, but kindled from within  
As 'twere with dawn. She was dark-hair'd, dark-eyed :  
Oh, such dark eyes ! a single glance of them  
Will govern a whole life from birth to death,  
Careless of all things else, led on with light  
In trances and in visions : look at them,  
You lose yourself in utter ignorance ;  
You cannot find their depth ; for they go back,  
And farther back, and still withdraw themselves  
Quite into the deep soul, that evermore  
Fresh springing from her fountains in the brain,  
Still pouring thro', floods with redundant life  
Her narrow portals.

Trust me, long ago  
I should have died, if it were possible  
To die in gazing on that perfectness  
Which I do bear within me : I had died,

But from my farthest lapse, my latest ebb,  
Thine image, like a charm of light and strength  
Upon the waters, push'd me back again  
On these deserted sands of barren life.  
Tho' from the deep vault where the heart of Hope  
Fell into dust, and crumbled in the dark—  
Forgetting how to render beautiful  
Her countenance with quick and healthful blood—  
Thou didst not sway me upward ; could I perish  
While thou, a meteor of the sepulchre,  
Didst swathe thyself all round Hope's quiet urn  
For ever? He, that saith it, hath o'erstept  
The slippery footing of his narrow wit,  
And fall'n away from judgment. Thou art light,  
To which my spirit leaneth all her flowers,  
And length of days, and immortality  
Of thought, and freshness ever self-renew'd.  
For Time and Grief abode too long with Life,  
And, like all other friends i' the world, at last  
They grew weary of her fellowship :  
So Time and Grief did beckon unto Death,  
And Death drew nigh and beat the doors of Life ;  
But thou didst sit alone in the inner house,  
A wakeful portress, and didst parle with Death, —  
'This is a charmed dwelling which I hold ;'  
So Death gave back, and would no further come.  
Yet is my life nor in the present time,

Nor in the present place. To me alone,  
Push'd from his chair of regal heritage,  
The Present is the vassal of the Past :  
So that, in that I *have* lived, do I live,  
And cannot die, and am, in having been—  
A portion of the pleasant yesterday,  
Thrust forward on to-day and out of place ;  
A body journeying onward, sick with toil,  
The weight as if of age upon my limbs,  
The grasp of hopeless grief about my heart,  
And all the senses weaken'd, save in that,  
Which long ago they had glean'd and garner'd up  
Into the granaries of memory—  
The clear brow, bulwark of the precious brain,  
Chink'd as you see, and seam'd—and all the while  
The light soul twines and mingles with the growths  
Of vigorous early days, attracted, won,  
Married, made one with, molten into all  
The beautiful in Past of act or place,  
And like the all-enduring camel, driven  
Far from the diamond fountain by the palms,  
Who toils across the middle moonlit nights,  
Or when the white heats of the blinding noons  
Beat from the concave sand ; yet in him keeps  
A draught of that sweet fountain that he loves,  
To stay his feet from falling, and his spirit  
From bitterness of death.

Ye ask me, friends,  
When I began to love. How should I tell you?  
Or from the after-fulness of my heart,  
Flow back again unto my slender spring  
And first of love, tho' every turn and depth  
Between is clearer in my life than all  
Its present flow. Ye know not what ye ask.  
How should the broad and open flower tell  
What sort of bud it was, when, prest together  
In its green sheath, close-lapt in silken folds,  
It seem'd to keep its sweetness to itself,  
Yet was not the less sweet for that it seem'd?  
For young Life knows not when young Life was born,  
But takes it all for granted : neither Love,  
Warm in the heart, his cradle, can remember  
Love in the womb, but resteth satisfied,  
Looking on her that brought him to the light :  
Or as men know not when they fall asleep  
Into delicious dreams, our other life,  
So know I not when I began to love.  
This is my sum of knowledge—that my love  
Grew with myself—say rather, was my growth,  
My inward sap, the hold I have on earth,  
My outward circling air wherewith I breathe,  
Which yet upholds my life, and evermore  
Is to me daily life and daily death :  
For how should I have lived and not have loved?

Can ye take off the sweetness from the flower,  
The colour and the sweetness from the rose,  
And place them by themselves ; or set apart  
Their motions and their brightness from the stars,  
And then point out the flower or the star ?  
Or build a wall betwixt my life and love,  
And tell me where I am ? 'Tis even thus :  
In that I live I love ; because I love  
I live : whate'er is fountain to the one  
Is fountain to the other ; and whene'er  
Our God unknits the riddle of the one,  
There is no shade or fold of mystery  
Swathing the other.

Many, many years,  
(For they seem many and my most of life,  
And well I could have linger'd in that porch,  
So unproportion'd to the dwelling-place,)  
In the Maydews of childhood, opposite  
The flush and dawn of youth, we lived together,  
Apart, alone together on those hills.

Before he saw my day my father died,  
And he was happy that he saw it not ;  
But I and the first daisy on his grave  
From the same clay came into light at once.  
As Love and I do number equal years,  
So she, my love, is of an age with me.

How like each other was the birth of each !  
On the same morning, almost the same hour,  
Under the selfsame aspect of the stars,  
(Oh falsehood of all starcraft !) we were born.  
How like each other was the birth of each !  
The sister of my mother—she that bore  
Camilla close beneath her beating heart,  
Which to the imprison'd spirit of the child,  
With its true-touched pulses in the flow  
And hourly visitation of the blood,  
Sent notes of preparation manifold,  
And mellow'd echoes of the outer world—  
My mother's sister, mother of my love,  
Who had a twofold claim upon my heart,  
One twofold mightier than the other was,  
In giving so much beauty to the world,  
And so much wealth as God had charged her with—  
Loathing to put it from herself for ever,  
Left her own life with it ; and dying thus,  
Crown'd with her highest act the placid face  
And breathless body of her good deeds past.

So were we born, so orphan'd. She was motherless  
And I without a father. So from each  
Of those two pillars which from earth uphold  
Our childhood, one had fallen away, and all  
The careful burthen of our tender years

Trembled upon the other. He that gave  
Her life, to me delightedly fulfill'd  
All lovingkindnesses, all offices  
Of watchful care and trembling tenderness.  
He waked for both : he pray'd for both : he slept  
Dreaming of both : nor was his love the less  
Because it was divided, and shot forth  
Boughs on each side, laden with wholesome shade,  
Wherein we nested sleeping or awake,  
And sang aloud the matin-song of life.

She was my foster-sister : on one arm  
The flaxen ringlets of our infancies  
Wander'd, the while we rested : one soft lap  
Pillow'd us both : a common light of eyes  
Was on us as we lay : our baby lips,  
Kissing one bosom, ever drew from thence  
The stream of life, one stream, one life, one blood,  
One sustenance, which, still as thought grew large,  
Still larger moulding all the house of thought,  
Made all our tastes and fancies like, perhaps—  
All—all but one ; and strange to me, and sweet,  
Sweet thro' strange years to know that whatsoe'er  
Our general mother meant for me alone,  
Our mutual mother dealt to both of us :  
So what was earliest mine in earliest life,  
I shared with her in whom myself remains.



As was our childhood, so our infancy,  
They tell me, was a very miracle  
Of fellow-feeling and communion.  
They tell me that we would not be alone,—  
We cried when we were parted ; when I wept,  
Her smile lit up the rainbow on my tears,  
Stay'd on the cloud of sorrow ; that we loved  
The sound of one-another's voices more  
Than the gray cuckoo loves his name, and learn'd  
To lisp in tune together ; that we slept  
In the same cradle always, face to face.  
Heart beating time to heart, lip pressing lip,  
Folding each other, breathing on each other,  
Dreaming together (dreaming of each other  
They should have added), till the morning light  
Sloped thro' the pines, upon the dewy pane  
Falling, unseal'd our eyelids, and we woke  
To gaze upon each other. If this be true,  
At thought of which my whole soul languishes  
And faints, and hath no pulse, no breath—as tho'  
A man in some still garden should infuse  
Rich atar in the bosom of the rose,  
Till, drunk with its own wine, and overfull  
Of sweetness, and in smelling of itself,  
It fall on its own thorns—if this be true—  
And that way my wish leads me evermore  
Still to believe it—'tis so sweet a thought,

Why in the utter stillness of the soul  
Doth question'd memory answer not, nor tell  
Of this our earliest, our closest-drawn,  
Most loveliest, earthly-heavenliest harmony?

O blossom'd portal of the lonely house,  
Green prelude, April promise, glad new-year  
Of Being, which with earliest violets  
And lavish carol of clear-throated larks  
Fill'd all the March of life!—I will not speak of thee,  
These have not seen thee, these can never know thee,  
They cannot understand me. Pass we then  
A term of eighteen years. Ye would but laugh,  
If I should tell you how I hoard in thought  
The faded rhymes and scraps of ancient crones,  
Gray relics of the nurseries of the world,  
Which are as gems set in my memory,  
Because she learnt them with me; or what use  
To know her father left us just before  
The daffodil was blown? or how we found  
The dead man cast upon the shore? All this  
Seems to the quiet daylight of your minds  
But cloud and smoke, and in the dark of mine  
Is traced with flame. Move with me to the event.

There came a glorious morning, such a one  
As dawns but once a season. Mercury  
On such a morning would have flung himself  
From cloud to cloud, and swum with balanced wings

To some tall mountain : when I said to her,  
'A day for Gods to stoop,' she answered, 'Ay,  
And men to soar : ' for as that other gazed,  
Shading his eyes till all the fiery cloud,  
The prophet and the chariot and the steeds,  
Suck'd into oneness like a little star  
Were drunk into the inmost blue, we stood,  
When first we came from out the pines at noon,  
With hands for eaves, uplooking and almost  
Waiting to see some blessed shape in heaven,  
So bathed we were in brilliance. Never yet  
Before or after have I known the spring  
Pour with such sudden deluges of light  
Into the middle summer ; for that day  
Love, rising, shook his wings, and charged the winds  
With spiced May-sweets from bound to bound, and  
blew  
Fresh fire into the sun, and from within  
Burst thro' the heated buds, and sent his soul  
Into the songs of birds, and touch'd far-off  
His mountain-altars, his high hills, with flame  
Milder and purer.

Thro' the rocks we wound :  
The great pine shook with lonely sounds of joy  
That came on the sea-wind. As mountain streams

Our bloods ran free : the sunshine seem'd to brood  
More warmly on the heart than on the brow.  
We often paused, and, looking back, we saw  
'The clefts and openings in the mountains fill'd  
With the blue valley and the glistening brooks,  
And all the low dark groves, a land of love !  
A land of promise, a land of memory,  
A land of promise flowing with the milk  
And honey of delicious memories !  
And down to sea, and far as eye could ken,  
Each way from verge to verge a Holy Land,  
Still growing holier as you near'd the bay,  
For there the Temple stood.

When we had reach'd  
The grassy platform on some hill, I stoop'd,  
I gather'd the wild herbs, and for her brows  
And mine made garlands of the selfsame flower,  
Which she took smiling, and with my work thus  
Crown'd her clear forehead. Once or twice she told me  
(For I remember all things) to let grow  
The flowers that run poison in their veins.  
She said, 'The evil flourish in the world.'  
Then playfully she gave herself the lie—  
'Nothing in nature is unbeautiful ;  
So, brother, pluck and spare not.' So I wove  
Ev'n the dull-blooded poppy-stem, 'whose flower,

Hued with the scarlet of a fierce sunrise,  
Like to the wild youth of an evil prince,  
Is without sweetness, but who crowns himself  
Above the naked poisons of his heart  
In his old age.' A graceful thought of hers  
Grav'n on my fancy ! And oh, how like a nymph,  
A stately mountain nymph she look'd ! how native  
Unto the hills she trod on ! While I gazed  
My coronal slowly disentwined itself  
And fell between us both ; tho' while I gazed  
My spirit leap'd as with those thrills of bliss  
That strike across the soul in prayer, and show us  
That we are surely heard. Methought a light  
Burst from the garland I had wov'n, and stood  
A solid glory on her bright black hair ;  
A light methought broke from her dark, dark eyes,  
And shot itself into the singing winds ;  
A mystic light flash'd ev'n from her white robe  
As from a glass in the sun, and fell about  
My footsteps on the mountains.

Last we came

To what our people call 'The Hill of Woe.'  
A bridge is there, that, look'd at from beneath  
Seems but a cobweb filament to link  
The yawning of an earthquake-cloven chasm.  
And thence one night, when all the winds were loud,

A woful man (for so the story went)  
Had thrust his wife and child and dash'd himself  
Into the dizzy depth below. Below,  
Fierce in the strength of far descent, a stream  
Flies with a shatter'd foam along the chasm.

The path was perilous, loosely strown with crags :  
We mounted slowly ; yet to both there came  
The joy of life in steepness overcome,  
And victories of ascent, and looking down  
On all that had look'd down on us ; and joy  
In breathing nearer heaven ; and joy to me,  
High over all the azure-circled earth,  
To breathe with her as if in heaven itself ;  
And more than joy that I to her became  
Her guardian and her angel, raising her  
Still higher, past all peril, until she saw  
Beneath her feet the region far away,  
Beyond the nearest mountain's bosky brows,  
Arise in open prospect—heath and hill,  
And hollow lined and wooded to the lips,  
And steep-down walls of battlemented rock  
Gilded with broom, or shatter'd into spires,  
And glory of broad waters interfused,  
Whence rose as it were breath and steam of gold,  
And over all the great wood rioting  
And climbing, streak'd or starr'd at intervals  
With falling brook or blossom'd bush—and last,

Framing the mighty landscape to the west,  
A purple range of mountain-cones, between  
Whose interspaces gush'd in blinding bursts  
The incorporate blaze of sun and sea.

At length

Descending from the point and standing both,  
There on the tremulous bridge, that from beneath  
Had seem'd a gossamer filament up in air,  
We paused amid the splendour. All the west  
And ev'n unto the middle south was ribb'd  
And barr'd with bloom on bloom. The sun below,  
Held for a space 'twixt cloud and wave, shower'd down  
Rays of a mighty circle, weaving over  
That various wilderness a tissue of light  
Unparallel'd. On the other side, the moon,  
Half-melted into thin blue air, stood still,  
And pale and fibrous as a wither'd leaf,  
Nor yet endured in presence of His eyes  
To indue his lustre ; most unloverlike,  
Since in his absence full of light and joy,  
And giving light to others. But this most,  
Next to her presence whom I loved so well,  
Spoke loudly even into my inmost heart  
As to my outward hearing : the loud stream,  
Forth issuing from his portals in the crag  
(A visible link unto the home of my heart),

Ran amber toward the west, and nigh the sea  
Parting my own loved mountains was received,  
Shorn of its strength, into the sympathy  
Of that small bay, which out to open main  
Glow'd intermingling close beneath the sun.  
Spirit of Love ! that little hour was bound  
Shut in from Time, and dedicate to thee :  
Thy fires from heaven had touch'd it, and the earth  
They fell on became hallow'd evermore.

We turn'd : our eyes met : hers were bright, and  
mine  
Were dim with floating tears, that shot the sunset  
In lightnings round me ; and my name was borne  
Upon her breath. Henceforth my name has been  
A hallow'd memory like the names of old,  
A center'd, glory-circled memory,  
And a peculiar treasure, brooking not  
Exchange or currency : and in that hour  
A hope flow'd round me, like a golden mist  
Charm'd amid eddies of melodious airs,  
A moment, ere the onward whirlwind shatter it,  
Waver'd and floated—which was less than Hope,  
Because it lack'd the power of perfect Hope ;  
But which was more and higher than all Hope,  
Because all other Hope had lower aim ;  
Even that this name to which her gracious lips



Did lend such gentle utterance, this one name,  
In some obscure hereafter, might inwreathe  
(How lovelier, nobler then !) her life, her love,  
With my life, love, soul, spirit, and heart and strength.

‘Brother,’ she said, ‘let this be call’d henceforth  
The Hill of Hope ;’ and I replied, ‘O sister,  
My will is one with thine ; the Hill of Hope.’  
Nevertheless, we did not change the name.

I did not speak : I could not speak my love.  
Love lieth deep : Love dwells not in lip-depths.  
Love wraps his wings on either side the heart,  
Constraining it with kisses close and warm,  
Absorbing all the incense of sweet thoughts  
So that they pass not to the shrine of sound.  
Else had the life of that delighted hour  
Drunk in the largeness of the utterance  
Of Love ; but how should Earthly measure mete  
The Heavenly-unmeasured or unlimited Love,  
Who scarce can tune his high majestic sense  
Unto the thundersong that wheels the spheres,  
Scarce living in the Æolian harmony,  
And flowing odour of the spacious air,  
Scarce housed within the circle of this Earth,  
Be cabin’d up in words and syllables,  
Which pass with that which breathes them ? Sooner  
Earth

Might go round Heaven, and the strait girth of Time  
Inswathe the fulness of Eternity,  
Than language grasp the infinite of Love.

O day which did enwomb that happy hour,  
Thou art blessed in the years, divinest day !  
O Genius of that hour which dost uphold  
Thy coronal of glory like a God,  
Amid thy melancholy mates far-seen,  
Who walk before thee, ever turning round  
To gaze upon thee till their eyes are dim  
With dwelling on the light and depth of thine,  
Thy name is ever worshipp'd among hours !  
Had I died then, I had not seem'd to die,  
For bliss stood round me like the light of Heaven,—  
Had I died then, I had not known the death ;  
Yea had the Power from whose right hand the light  
Of Life issueth, and from whose left hand floweth  
The Shadow of Death, perennial effluences,  
Whereof to all that draw the wholesome air,  
Somewhile the one must overflow the other ;  
Then had he stemm'd my day with night, and driven  
My current to the fountain whence it sprang,—  
Even his own abiding excellence—  
On me, methinks, that shock of gloom had fall'n  
Unfelt, and in this glory I had merged  
The other, like the sun I gazed upon,

Which seeming for the moment due to death,  
And dipping his head low beneath the verge,  
Yet bearing round about him his own day,  
In confidence of unabated strength,  
Steppeth from Heaven to Heaven, from light to light,  
And holdeth his undimmed forehead far  
Into a clearer zenith, pure of cloud.

We trod the shadow of the downward hill ;  
We past from light to dark. On the other side  
Is scoop'd a cavern and a mountain hall,  
Which none have fathom'd. If you go far in  
(The country people rumour) you may hear  
The moaning of the woman and the child,  
Shut in the secret chambers of the rock.  
I too have heard a sound—perchance of streams  
Running far on within its inmost halls,  
The home of darkness ; but the cavern-mouth,  
Half overtrailed with a wanton weed,  
Gives birth to a brawling brook, that passing lightly  
Adown a natural stair of tangled roots,  
Is presently received in a sweet grave  
Of eglantines, a place of burial  
Far lovelier than its cradle ; for unseen,  
But taken with the sweetness of the place,  
It makes a constant bubbling melody  
That drowns the nearer echoes. Lower down

Spreads out a little lake, that, flooding, leaves  
Low banks of yellow sand ; and from the woods  
That belt it rise three dark, tall cypresses,—  
Three cypresses, symbols of mortal woe,  
That men plant over graves.

Hither we came,  
And sitting down upon the golden moss,  
Held converse sweet and low—low converse sweet,  
In which our voices bore least part. The wind  
Told a lovetale beside us, how he woo'd  
The waters, and the waters answering lisp'd  
To kisses of the wind, that, sick with love,  
Fainted at intervals, and grew again  
To utterance of passion. Ye cannot shape  
Fancy so fair as is this memory.  
Methought all excellence that ever was  
Had drawn herself from many thousand years,  
And all the separate Edens of this earth,  
To centre in this place and time. I listen'd,  
And her words stole with most prevailing sweetness  
Into my heart, as thronging fancies come  
To boys and girls when summer days are new,  
And soul and heart and body are all at ease :  
What marvel my Camilla told me all ?  
It was so happy an hour, so sweet a place,  
And I was as the brother of her blood,

And by that name I moved upon her breath ;  
Dear name, which had too much of nearness in it  
And heralded the distance of this time !  
At first her voice was very sweet and low,  
As if she were afraid of utterance ;  
But in the onward current of her speech,  
(As echoes of the hollow-banked brooks  
Are fashion'd by the channel which they keep),  
Her words did of their meaning borrow sound,  
Her cheek did catch the colour of her words.  
I heard and trembled, yet I could but hear ;  
My heart paused—my raised eyelids would not fall,  
But still I kept my eyes upon the sky.  
I seem'd the only part of Time stood still,  
And saw the motion of all other things ;  
While her words, syllable by syllable,  
Like water, drop by drop, upon my ear  
Fell ; and I wish'd, yet wish'd her not to speak ;  
But she spake on, for I did name no wish,  
What marvel my Camilla told me all  
Her maiden dignities of Hope and Love—  
'Perchance,' she said, 'return'd.' Even then the stars  
Did tremble in their stations as I gazed ;  
But she spake on, for I did name no wish,  
No wish—no hope. Hope was not wholly dead,  
But breathing hard at the approach of Death,—  
Camilla, my Camilla, who was mine

No longer in the dearest sense of mine—  
For all the secret of her inmost heart,  
And all the maiden empire of her mind,  
Lay like a map before me, and I saw  
There, where I hoped myself to reign as king,  
There, where that day I crown'd myself as king,  
There in my realm and even on my throne,  
*Another!* then it seem'd as tho' a link  
Of some tight chain within my inmost frame  
Was riven in twain : that life I heeded not  
Flow'd from me, and the darkness of the grave,  
The darkness of the grave and utter night,  
Did swallow up my vision ; at her feet,  
Even the feet of her I loved, I fell,  
Smit with exceeding sorrow unto Death.

Then had the earth beneath me yawning cloven  
With such a sound as when an iceberg splits  
From cope to base—had Heaven from all her doors,  
With all her golden thresholds clashing, roll'd  
Her heaviest thunder—I had lain as dead,  
Mute, blind and motionless as then I lay ;  
Dead, for henceforth there was no life for me !  
Mute, for henceforth what use were words to me !  
Blind, for the day was as the night to me !  
The night to me was kinder than the day ;  
The night in pity took away my day,

Because my grief as yet was newly born  
Of eyes too weak to look upon the light ;  
And thro' the hasty notice of the ear  
Frail Life was startled from the tender love  
Of him she brooded over. Would I had lain  
Until the plaited ivy-tress had wound  
Round my worn limbs, and the wild brier had driven  
Its knotted thorns thro' my unpaining brows,  
Leaning its roses on my faded eyes.  
The wind had blown above me, and the rain  
Had fall'n upon me, and the gilded snake  
Had nestled in this bosom-throne of Love,  
But I had been at rest for evermore.

Long time entrancement held me. All too soon  
Life (like a wanton too-officious friend,  
Who will not *hear* denial, vain and rude  
With proffer of unwish'd-for services)  
Entering all the avenues of sense  
Past thro' into his citadel, the brain,  
With hated warmth of apprehensiveness.  
And first the chillness of the sprinkled brook  
Smote on my brows, and then I seem'd to hear  
Its murmur, as the drowning seaman hears,  
Who with his head below the surface dropt  
Listens the muffled booming indistinct  
Of the confused floods, and dimly knows

His head shall rise no more : and then came in  
The white light of the weary moon above,  
Diffused and molten into flaky cloud.  
Was my sight drunk that it did shape to me  
Him who should own that name ? Were it not well  
If so be that the echo of that name  
Ringing within the fancy had updrawn  
A fashion and a phantasm of the form  
It should attach to ? Phantom !—had the ghastliest  
That ever lusted for a body, sucking  
The foul steam of the grave to thicken by it,  
There in the shuddering moonlight brought its face  
And what it has for eyes as close to mine  
As he did—better that than his, than he  
The friend, the neighbour, Lionel, the beloved,  
The loved, the lover, the happy Lionel,  
The low-voiced, tender-spirited Lionel,  
All joy, to whom my agony was a joy.  
O how her choice did leap forth from his eyes !  
O how her love did clothe itself in smiles  
About his lips ! and—not one moment's grace—  
Then when the effect weigh'd seas upon my head  
To come my way ! to twit me with the cause !

Was not the land as free thro' all her ways  
To him as me ? Was not his wont to walk  
Between the going light and growing night ?



Had I not learnt my loss before he came?  
Could that be more because he came my way?  
Why should he not come my way if he would?  
And yet to-night, to-night—when all my wealth  
Flash'd from me in a moment and I fell  
Beggard for ever—why *should* he come my way  
Robed in those robes of light I must not wear,  
With that great crown of beams about his brows—  
Come like an angel to a damned soul,  
To tell him of the bliss he had with God—  
Come like a careless and a greedy heir  
That scarce can wait the reading of the will  
Before he takes possession? Was mine a mood  
To be invaded rudely, and not rather  
A sacred, secret, unapproached woe,  
Unspeakable? I was shut up with Grief;  
She took the body of my past delight,  
Narded and swathed and balm'd it for herself,  
And laid it in a sepulchre of rock  
Never to rise again. I was led mute  
Into her temple like a sacrifice;  
I was the High Priest in her holiest place,  
Not to be loudly broken in upon.

Oh friend, thoughts deep and heavy as these well-  
nigh  
O'erbore the limits of my brain : but he

Bent o'er me, and my neck his arm upstay'd.  
I thought it was an adder's fold, and once  
I strove to disengage myself, but fail'd,  
Being so feeble : she bent above me, too ;  
Wan was her cheek ; for whatsoe'er of blight  
Lives in the dewy touch of pity had made  
The red rose there a pale one—and her eyes—  
I saw the moonlight glitter on their tears—  
And some few drops of that distressful rain  
Fell on my face, and her long ringlets moved,  
Drooping and beaten by the breeze, and brush'd  
My fallen forehead in their to and fro,  
For in the sudden anguish of her heart  
Loosed from their simple thrall they had flow'd abroad,  
And floated on and parted round her neck,  
Mantling her form halfway. She, when I woke,  
Something she ask'd, I know not what, and ask'd,  
Unanswer'd, since I spake not ; for the sound  
Of that dear voice so musically low,  
And now first heard with any sense of pain,  
As it had taken life away before,  
Choked all the syllables, that strove to rise  
From my full heart.

The blissful lover, too,  
From his great hoard of happiness distill'd  
Some drops of solace ; like a vain rich man,

That, having always prosper'd in the world,  
Folding his hands, deals comfortable words  
To hearts wounded for ever ; yet, in truth,  
Fair speech was his and delicate of phrase,  
Falling in whispers on the sense, address'd  
More to the inward than the outward ear,  
As rain of the midsummer midnight soft,  
Scarce-heard, recalling fragrance and the green  
Of the dead spring : but mine was wholly dead,  
No bud, no leaf, no flower, no fruit for me.  
Yet who had done, or who had suffer'd wrong ?  
And why was I to darken their pure love,  
If, as I found, they two did love each other,  
Because my own was darken'd ? Why was I  
To cross between their happy star and them ?  
To stand a shadow by their shining doors,  
And vex them with my darkness ? Did I love her ?  
Ye know that I did love her ; to this present  
My full-orb'd love has waned not. Did I love her,  
And could I look upon her tearful eyes ?  
What had *she* done to weep ? Why should *she*  
weep ?

O innocent of spirit—let my heart  
Break rather—whom the gentlest airs of Heaven  
Should kiss with an unwonted gentleness.  
Her love did murder mine ? What then ? She  
deem'd

I wore a brother's mind : she call'd me brother :  
She told me all her love : she shall not weep.

The brightness of a burning thought, awhile  
In battle with the glooms of my dark will,  
Moonlike emerged, and to itself lit up  
There on the depth of an unfathom'd woe  
Reflex of action. Starting up at once,  
As from a dismal dream of my own death,  
I, for I loved her, lost my love in Love ;  
I, for I loved her, graspt the hand she lov'd,  
And laid it in her own, and sent my cry  
Thro' the blank night to Him who loving made  
The happy and the unhappy love, that He  
Would hold the hand of blessing over them,  
Lionel, the happy, and her, and her, his bride !  
Let them so love that men and boys may say,  
'Lo ! how they love each other !' till their love  
Shall ripen to a proverb, unto all  
Known, when their faces are forgot in the land --  
One golden dream of love, from which may death  
Awake them with heaven's music in a life  
More living to some happier happiness,  
Swallowing its precedent in victory.  
And as for me, Camilla, as for me,—  
The dew of tears is an unwholesome dew,  
They will but sicken the sick plant the more.

Deem that I love thee but as brothers do,  
So shalt thou love me still as sisters do ;  
Or if thou dream aught farther, dream but how  
I could have loved thee, had there been none else  
To love as lovers, loved again by thee.

Or this, or somewhat like to this, I spake,  
When I beheld her weep so ruefully ;  
For sure my love should ne'er indue the front  
And mask of Hate, who lives on others' moans.  
Shall Love pledge Hatred in her bitter draughts,  
And batten on her poisons? Love forbid !  
Love passeth not the threshold of cold Hate,  
And Hate is strange beneath the roof of Love.  
O Love, if thou be'st Love, dry up these tears  
Shed for the love of Love ; for tho' mine image,  
The subject of thy power, be cold in her,  
Yet, like cold snow, it melteth in the source  
Of these sad tears, and feeds their downward flow.  
So Love, arraign'd to judgment and to death,  
Received unto himself a part of blame,  
Being guiltless, as an innocent prisoner,  
Who, when the woful sentence hath been past,  
And all the clearness of his fame hath gone  
Beneath the shadow of the curse of man,  
First falls asleep in swoon, wherefrom awaked,  
And looking round upon his tearful friends,

Forthwith and in his agony conceives  
A shameful sense as of a cleaving crime—  
For whence without some guilt should such grief be?

So died that hour, and fell into the abysm  
Of forms outworn, but not to me outworn,  
Who never hail'd another—was there one?  
There might be one—one other, worth the life  
That made it sensible. So that hour died  
Like odour rapt into the winged wind  
Borne into alien lands and far away.

There be some hearts so airily built, that they,  
They—when their love is wreck'd—if Love can  
wreck—  
On that sharp ridge of utmost doom ride highly  
Above the perilous seas of Change and Chance ;  
Nay, more, hold out the lights of cheerfulness ;  
As the tall ship, that many a dreary year  
Knit to some dismal sandbank far at sea,  
All thro' the livelong hours of utter dark,  
Showers slanting light upon the dolorous wave.  
For me—what light, what gleam on those black ways  
Where Love could walk with banish'd Hope no more?

It was ill-done to part you, Sisters fair ;  
Love's arms were wreath'd about the neck of Hope,

And Hope kiss'd Love, and Love drew in her breath  
In that close kiss, and drank her whisper'd tales.  
They said that Love would die when Hope was gone,  
And Love mourn'd long, and sorrow'd after Hope ;  
At last she sought out Memory, and they trod  
The same old paths where Love had walk'd with Hope,  
And Memory fed the soul of Love with tears.

## II.

FROM that time forth I would not see her more ;  
But many weary moons I lived alone—  
Alone, and in the heart of the great forest.  
Sometimes upon the hills beside the sea  
All day I watch'd the floating isles of shade,  
And sometimes on the shore, upon the sands  
Insensibly I drew her name, until  
The meaning of the letters shot into  
My brain ; anon the wanton billow wash'd  
Them over, till they faded like my love.  
The hollow caverns heard me—the black brooks  
Of the midforest heard me—the soft winds,  
Laden with thistledown and seeds of flowers,  
Paused in their course to hear me, for my voice  
Was all of thee : the merry linnet knew me,  
The squirrel knew me, and the dragonfly  
Shot by me like a flash of purple fire.  
The rough brier tore my bleeding palms ; the hemlock,  
Brow-high, did strike my forehead as I past ;  
Yet trod I not the wildflower in my path,  
Nor bruised the wildbird's egg.



Was this the end?

Why grew we then together in one plot?  
Why fed we from one fountain? drew one sun?  
Why were our mothers' branches of one stem?  
Why were we one in all things, save in that  
Where to have been one had been the cope and crown  
Of all I hoped and fear'd?—if that same nearness  
Were father to this distance, and that *one*  
Vauntcourier to this *double*? if Affection  
Living slew Love, and Sympathy hew'd out  
The bosom-sepulchre of Sympathy?

Chiefly I sought the cavern and the hill  
Where last we roam'd together, for the sound  
Of the loud stream was pleasant, and the wind  
Came wooingly with woodbine smells. Sometimes  
All day I sat within the cavern-mouth,  
Fixing my eyes on those three cypress-cones  
That spired above the wood; and with mad hand  
Tearing the bright leaves of the ivy-screen,  
I cast them in the noisy brook beneath,  
And watch'd them till they vanish'd from my sight  
Beneath the bower of wreathed eglantines:  
And all the fragments of the living rock  
(Huge blocks, which some old trembling of the world  
Had loosen'd from the mountain, till they fell  
Half-digging their own graves) these in my agony

Did I make bare of all the golden moss,  
Wherewith the dashing runnel in the spring  
Had liveried them all over. In my brain  
The spirit seem'd to flag from thought to thought,  
As moonlight wandering thro' a mist : my blood  
Crept like marsh drains thro' all my languid limbs ;  
The motions of my heart seem'd far within me,  
Unfrequent, low, as tho' it told its pulses ;  
And yet it shook me, that my frame would shudder,  
As if 'twere drawn asunder by the rack.  
But over the deep graves of Hope and Fear,  
And all the broken palaces of the Past,  
Brooded one master-passion evermore,  
Like to a low-hung and a fiery sky  
Above some fair metropolis, earth-shock'd,—  
Hung round with ragged rims and burning folds,—  
Embathing all with wild and woful hues,  
Great hills of ruins, and collapsed masses  
Of thundershaken columns indistinct,  
And fused together in the tyrannous light—  
Ruins, the ruin of all my life and me !

Sometimes I thought Camilla was no more,  
Some one had told me she was dead, and ask'd  
If I would see her burial : then I seem'd  
To rise, and through the forest-shadow borne  
With more than mortal swiftness, I ran down

The steepy sea-bank, till I came upon  
The rear of a procession, curving round  
The silver-sheeted bay : in front of which  
Six stately virgins, all in white, upbare  
A broad earth-sweeping pall of whitest lawn,  
Wreathed round the bier with garlands : in the distance,

From out the yellow woods upon the hill  
Look'd forth the summit and the pinnacles  
Of a gray steeple—thence at intervals  
A low bell tolling. All the pageantry,  
Save those six virgins which upheld the bier,  
Were stoled from head to foot in flowing black ;  
One walk'd abreast with me, and veil'd his brow,  
And he was loud in weeping and in praise  
Of her, we follow'd : a strong sympathy  
Shook all my soul : I flung myself upon him  
In tears and cries : I told him all my love,  
How I had loved her from the first ; whereat  
He shrank and howl'd, and from his brow drew back  
His hand to push me from him ; and the face,  
The very face and form of Lionel  
Flash'd thro' my eyes into my innermost brain,  
And at his feet I seem'd to faint and fall,  
To fall and die away. I could not rise  
Albeit I strove to follow. They past on,  
The lordly Phantasms ! in their floating folds

They past and were no more : but I had fallen  
Prone by the dashing runnel on the grass.

Alway the inaudible invisible thought,  
Artificer and subject, lord and slave,  
Shaped by the audible and visible,  
Moulded the audible and visible ;  
All crisped sounds of wave and leaf and wind,  
Flatter'd the fancy of my fading brain ;  
The cloud-pavilion'd element, the wood,  
The mountain, the three cypresses, the cave,  
Storm, sunset, glows and glories of the moon  
Below black firs, when silent-creeping winds  
Laid the long night in silver streaks and bars,  
Were wrought into the tissue of my dream :  
The moanings in the forest, the loud brook,  
Cries of the partridge like a rusty key  
'Turn'd in a lock, owl-whoop and dorhawk-whirr  
Awoke me not, but were a part of sleep,  
And voices in the distance calling to me  
And in my vision bidding me dream on,  
Like sounds without the twilight realm of dreams,  
Which wander round the bases of the hills,  
And murmur at the low-dropt eaves of sleep,  
Half-entering the portals. Oftentimes  
The vision had fair prelude, in the end  
Opening on darkness, stately vestibules

To caves and shows of Death : whether the mind,  
With some revenge—even to itself unknown,—  
Made strange division of its suffering  
With her, whom to have suffering view'd had been  
Extremest pain ; or that the clear-eyed Spirit,  
Being blunted in the Present, grew at length  
Prophetical and prescient of whate'er  
The Future had in store : or that which most  
Enchains belief, the sorrow of my spirit  
Was of so wide a compass it took in  
All I had loved, and my dull agony,  
Ideally to her transferr'd, became  
Anguish intolerable.

The day waned ;

Alone I sat with her : about my brow  
Her warm breath floated in the utterance  
Of silver-chorded tones : her lips were sunder'd  
With smiles of tranquil bliss, which broke in light  
Like morning from her eyes—her eloquent eyes,  
(As I have seen them many a hundred times)  
Fill'd all with pure clear fire, thro' mine down rain'd  
Their spirit-searching splendours. As a vision  
Unto a haggard prisoner, iron-stay'd  
In damp and dismal dungeons underground,  
Confined on points of faith, when strength is shock'd  
With torment, and expectancy of worse

Upon the morrow, thro' the ragged walls,  
All unawares before his half-shut eyes,  
Comes in upon him in the dead of night,  
And with the excess of sweetness and of awe,  
Makes the heart tremble, and the sight run over  
Upon his steely gyves ; so those fair eyes  
Shone on my darkness, forms which ever stood  
Within the magic cirque of memory,  
Invisible but deathless, waiting still  
The edict of the will to reassume  
The semblance of those rare realities  
Of which they were the mirrors. Now the light  
Which was their life, burst through the cloud of  
thought  
Keen, irrepressible.

It was a room  
Within the summer-house of which I spake,  
Hung round with paintings of the sea, and one  
A vessel in mid-ocean, her heaved prow  
Clambering, the mast bent and the ravin wind  
In her sail roaring. From the outer day,  
Betwixt the close-set ivies came a broad  
And solid beam of isolated light,  
Crowded with driving atomies, and fell  
Slanting upon that picture, from prime youth  
Well-known well-loved. She drew it long ago

Forthgazing on the waste and open sea,  
One morning when the upblown billow ran  
Shoreward beneath red clouds, and I had pour'd  
Into the shadowing pencil's naked forms  
Colour and life : it was a bond and seal  
Of friendship, spoken of with tearful smiles ;  
A monument of childhood and of love ;  
The poesy of childhood ; my lost love  
Symbol'd in storm. We gazed on it together  
In mute and glad remembrance, and each heart  
Grew closer to the other, and the eye  
Was riveted and charm-bound, gazing like  
The Indian on a still-eyed snake, low-couch'd—  
A beauty which is death ; when all at once  
That painted vessel, as with inner life,  
Began to heave upon that painted sea ;  
An earthquake, my loud heart-beats, made the  
ground  
Reel under us, and all at once, soul, life  
And breath and motion, past and flow'd away  
To those unreal billows : round and round  
A whirlwind caught and bore us ; mighty gyres  
Rapid and vast, of hissing spray wind-driven  
Far thro' the dizzy dark. Aloud she shriek'd ;  
My heart was cloven with pain ; I wound my arms  
About her : we whirl'd giddily ; the wind  
Sung ; but I clasp'd her without fear : her weight

Shrank in my grasp, and over my dim eyes,  
And parted lips which drank her breath, down-hung  
The jaws of Death : I, groaning, from me flung  
Her empty phantom : all the sway and whirl  
Of the storm dropt to windless calm, and I  
Down welter'd thro' the dark ever and ever.



## III.

I CAME one day and sat among the stones  
Strewn in the entry of the moaning cave ;  
A morning air, sweet after rain, ran over  
The rippling levels of the lake, and blew  
Coolness and moisture and all smells of bud  
And foliage from the dark and dripping woods  
Upon my fever'd brows that shook and throb'd  
From temple unto temple. To what height  
The day had grown I know not. Then came on me  
The hollow tolling of the bell, and all  
The vision of the bier. As heretofore  
I walk'd behind with one who veil'd his brow  
Methought by slow degrees the sullen bell  
Toll'd quicker, and the breakers on the shore  
Sloped into louder surf: those that went with me,  
And those that held the bier before my face,  
Moved with one spirit round about the bay,  
Trod swifter steps ; and while I walk'd with these  
In marvel at that gradual change, I thought  
Four bells instead of one began to ring,  
Four merry bells, four merry marriage-bells,

In clanging cadence jangling peal on peal —  
A long loud clash of rapid marriage-bells.  
Then those who led the van, and those in rear,  
Rush'd into dance, and like wild Bacchanals  
Fled onward to the steeple in the woods :  
I, too, was borne along and felt the blast  
Beat on my heated eyelids : all at once  
The front rank made a sudden halt ; the bells  
Lapsed into frightful stillness ; the surge fell  
From thunder into whispers ; those six maids  
With shrieks and ringing laughter on the sand  
Threw down the bier ; the woods upon the hill  
Waved with a sudden gust that sweeping down  
Took the edges of the pall, and blew it far  
Until it hung, a little silver cloud  
Over the sounding seas : I turn'd : my heart  
Shrank in me, like a snowflake in the hand,  
Waiting to see the settled countenance  
Of her I loved, adorn'd with fading flowers.  
But she from out her death-like chrysalis,  
She from her bier, as into fresher life,  
My sister, and my cousin, and my love,  
Leapt lightly clad in bridal white—her hair  
Studded with one rich Provence rose—a light  
Of smiling welcome round her lips—her eyes  
And cheeks as bright as when she climb'd the hill.  
One hand she reach'd to those that came behind,

And while I mused nor yet endured to take  
So rich a prize, the man who stood with me  
Stept gaily forward, throwing down his robes,  
And claspt her hand in his : again the bells  
Jangled and clang'd : again the stormy surf  
Crash'd in the shingle : and the whirling rout  
Led by those two rush'd into dance, and fled  
Wind-footed to the steeple in the woods,  
Till they were swallow'd in the leafy bowers,  
And I stood sole beside the vacant bier.

There, there, my latest vision—then the event !

## IV.

THE GOLDEN SUPPER.<sup>1</sup>*(Another speaks.)*

HE flies the event : he leaves the event to me :  
Poor Julian—how he rush'd away ; the bells,  
Those marriage-bells, echoing in ear and heart—  
But cast a parting glance at me, you saw,  
As who should say 'Continue.' Well he had  
One golden hour—of triumph shall I say ?  
Solace at least—before he left his home.

Would you had seen him in that hour of his !  
He moved thro' all of it majestically—  
Restrain'd himself quite to the close—but now—

Whether they *were* his lady's marriage-bells,  
Or prophets of them in his fantasy,  
I never ask'd : but Lionel and the girl  
Were wedded, and our Julian came again

<sup>1</sup> This poem is founded upon a story in Boccaccio. See Introduction, p. 3.

Back to his mother's house among the pines.  
But these, their gloom, the mountains and the  
Bay,  
The whole land weigh'd him down as Ætna does  
The Giant of Mythology : he would go,  
Would leave the land for ever, and had gone  
Surely, but for a whisper, 'Go not yet,'  
Some warning—sent divinely—as it seem'd  
By that which follow'd—but of this I deem  
As of the visions that he told—the event  
Glanced back upon them in his after life,  
And partly made them—tho' he knew it not.

And thus he stay'd and would not look at her—  
No not for months : but, when the eleventh moon  
After their marriage lit the lover's Bay,  
Heard yet once more the tolling bell, and said,  
Would you could toll me out of life, but found—  
All softly as his mother broke it to him—  
A crueller reason than a crazy ear,  
For that low knell tolling his lady dead—  
Dead—and had lain three days without a pulse :  
All that look'd on her had pronounced her dead.  
And so they bore her (for in Julian's land  
They never nail a dumb head up in elm),  
Bore her free-faced to the free airs of heaven,  
And laid her in the vault of her own kin.

What did he then ? not die : he is here and hale—  
Not plunge headforemost from the mountain there,  
And leave the name of Lover's Leap : not he :  
He knew the meaning of the whisper now,  
Thought that he knew it. ' This, I stay'd for this ;  
O love, I have not seen you for so long.  
Now, now, will I go down into the grave,  
I will be all alone with all I love,  
And kiss her on the lips. She is his no more :  
The dead returns to me, and I go down  
To kiss the dead.'

The fancy stirr'd him so  
He rose and went, and entering the dim vault,  
And, making there a sudden light, beheld  
All round about him that which all will be.  
The light was but a flash, and went again.  
Then at the far end of the vault he saw  
His lady with the moonlight on her face ;  
Her breast as in a shadow-prison, bars  
Of black and bands of silver, which the moon  
Struck from an open grating overhead  
High in the wall, and all the rest of her  
Drown'd in the gloom and horror of the vault.

' It was my wish,' he said, ' to pass, to sleep,  
To rest, to be with her—till the great day

Peal'd on us with that music which rights all,  
And raised us hand in hand.' And kneeling there  
Down in the dreadful dust that once was man,  
Dust, as he said, that once was loving hearts,  
Hearts that had beat with such a love as mine—  
Not such as mine, no, nor for such as her—  
He softly put his arm about her neck  
And kiss'd her more than once, till helpless death  
And silence made him bold—nay, but I wrong him,  
He revered his dear lady even in death ;  
But, placing his true hand upon her heart,  
'O, you warm heart,' he moan'd, 'not even death  
Can chill you all at once : ' then starting, thought  
His dreams had come again. 'Do I wake or sleep?  
Or am I made immortal, or my love  
Mortal once more?' It beat—the heart—it beat :  
Faint—but it beat : at which his own began  
To pulse with such a vehemence that it drown'd  
The feebler motion underneath his hand.  
But when at last his doubts were satisfied,  
He raised her softly from the sepulchre,  
And, wrapping her all over with the cloak  
He came in, and now striding fast, and now  
Sitting awhile to rest, but evermore  
Holding his golden burthen in his arms,  
So bore her thro' the solitary land  
Back to the mother's house where she was born.

There the good mother's kindly ministering,  
With half a night's appliances, recall'd  
Her fluttering life : she rais'd an eye that ask'd  
'Where?' till the things familiar to her youth  
Had made a silent answer : then she spoke  
'Here ! and how came I here?' and learning it  
(They told her somewhat rashly as I think)  
At once began to wander and to wail,  
'Ay, but you know that you must give me back :  
Send ! bid him come ;' but Lionel was away—  
Stung by his loss had vanish'd, none knew where.  
'He casts me out,' she wept, 'and goes'—a wail  
That seeming something, yet was nothing, born  
Not from believing mind, but shatter'd nerve,  
Yet haunting Julian, as her own reproof  
At some precipitance in her burial.  
Then, when her own true spirit had return'd,  
'Oh yes, and you,' she said, 'and none but you ?  
For you have given me life and love again,  
And none but you yourself shall tell him of it,  
And you shall give me back when he returns.'  
'Stay then a little,' answer'd Julian, 'here,  
And keep yourself, none knowing, to yourself ;  
And I will do your will. I may not stay,  
No, not an hour ; but send me notice of him  
When he returns, and then will I return,  
And I will make a solemn offering of you



To him you love.' And faintly she replied,  
'And I will do *your* will, and none shall know.'

Not know? with such a secret to be known.  
But all their house was old and loved them both,  
And all the house had known the loves of both ;  
Had died almost to serve them any way,  
And all the land was waste and solitary :  
And then he rode away ; but after this,  
An hour or two, Camilla's travail came  
Upon her, and that day a boy was born,  
Heir of his face and land, to Lionel.

And thus our lonely lover rode away,  
And pausing at a hostel in a marsh,  
There fever seized upon him : myself was then  
Travelling that land, and meant to rest an hour ;  
And sitting down to such a base repast,  
It makes me angry yet to speak of it—  
I heard a groaning overhead, and climb'd  
'The moulder'd stairs (for everything was vile)  
And in a loft, with none to wait on him,  
Found, as it seem'd, a skeleton alone,  
Raving of dead men's dust and beating hearts.

A dismal hostel in a dismal land,  
A flat malarian world of reed and rush !

But there from fever and my care of him  
Sprang up a friendship that may help us yet.  
For while we roam'd along the dreary coast,  
And waited for her message, piece by piece  
I learnt the drearier story of his life ;  
And, tho' he loved and honour'd Lionel,  
Found that the sudden wail his lady made  
Dwelt in his fancy : did he know her worth,  
Her beauty even ? should he not be taught,  
Ev'n by the price that others set upon it,  
The value of that jewel he had to guard ?

Suddenly came her notice and we past,  
I with our lovèr to his native Bay.

This love is of the brain, the mind, the soul :  
*That* makes the sequel pure ; tho' some of us  
Beginning at the sequel know no more.  
Not such am I : and yet I say the bird  
That will not hear my call, however sweet,  
But if my neighbour whistle answers him—  
What matter ? there are others in the wood.  
Yet when I saw her (and I thought him crazed,  
Tho' not with such a craziness as needs  
A cell and keeper), those dark eyes of hers—  
Oh ! such dark eyes ! and not her eyes alone,  
But all from these to where she touch'd on earth,

For such a craziness as Julian's look'd  
No less than one divine apology.

So sweetly and so modestly she came  
To greet us, her young hero in her arms !  
'Kiss him,' she said. 'You gave me life again.  
He, but for you, had never seen it once.  
His other father you ! Kiss him, and then  
Forgive him, if his name be Julian too.'

Talk of lost hopes and broken heart ! his own  
Sent such a flame into his face, I knew  
Some sudden vivid pleasure hit him there.

But he was all the more resolved to go,  
And sent at once to Lionel, praying him  
By that great love they both had borne the dead,  
To come and revel for one hour with him  
Before he left the land for evermore ;  
And then to friends —they were not many—who lived  
Scatteringly about that lonely land of his,  
And bad them to a banquet of farewells.

And Julian made a solemn feast : I never  
Sat at a costlier ; for all round his hall  
From column on to column, as in a wood,  
Not such as here—an equatorial one,

Great garlands swung and blossom'd ; and beneath,  
Heirlooms, and ancient miracles of Art,  
Chalice and salver, wines that, Heaven knows when,  
Had suck'd the fire of some forgotten sun,  
And kept it thro' a hundred years of gloom,  
Yet glowing in a heart of ruby—cups  
Where nymph and god ran ever round in gold—  
Others of glass as costly—some with gems  
Moveable and resettable at will,  
And trebling all the rest in value—Ah heavens !  
Why need I tell you all ?—suffice to say  
That whatsoever such a house as his,  
And his was old, has in it rare or fair  
Was brought before the guest : and they, the guests,  
Wonder'd at some strange light in Julian's eyes  
(I told you that he had his golden hour),  
And such a feast, ill-suited as it seem'd  
To such a time, to Lionel's loss and his  
And that resolved self-exile from a land  
He never would revisit, such a feast  
So rich, so strange, and stranger ev'n than rich,  
But rich as for the nuptials of a king.

And stranger yet, at one end of the hall  
Two great funereal curtains, looping down,  
Parted a little ere they met the floor,  
About a picture of his lady, taken

Some years before, and falling hid the frame.  
And just above the parting was a lamp :  
So the sweet figure folded round with night  
Seem'd stepping out of darkness with a smile.

Well then—our solemn feast—we ate and drank,  
And might—the wines being of such nobleness—  
Have jested also, but for Julian's eyes,  
And something weird and wild about it all :  
What was it ? for our lover seldom spoke,  
Scarce touch'd the meats ; but ever and anon  
A priceless goblet with a priceless wine  
Arising, show'd he drank beyond his use ;  
And when the feast was near an end, he said :

‘ There is a custom in the Orient, friends—  
I read of it in Persia—when a man  
Will honour those who feast with him, he brings  
And shows them whatsoever he accounts  
Of all his treasures the most beautiful,  
Gold, jewels, arms, whatever it may be.  
This custom ——’

Pausing here a moment, all  
The guests broke in upon him with meeting hands  
And cries about the banquet—‘ Beautiful !  
Who could desire more beauty at a feast ?’

The lover answer'd, 'There is more than one  
Here sitting who desires it. Laud me not  
Before my time, but hear me to the close.  
This custom steps yet further when the guest  
Is loved and honour'd to the uttermost.  
For after he hath shown him gems or gold,  
He brings and sets before him in rich guise  
That which is thrice as beautiful as these,  
The beauty that is dearest to his heart—  
"O my heart's lord, would I could show you," he  
says,  
"Ev'n my heart too." And I propose to-night  
To show you what is dearest to my heart,  
And my heart too.

' But solve me first a doubt.

I knew a man, nor many years ago ;  
He had a faithful servant, one who loved  
His master more than all on earth beside.  
He falling sick, and seeming close on death,  
His master would not wait until he died,  
But bad his menials bear him from the door,  
And leave him in the public way to die.  
I knew another, not so long ago,  
Who found the dying servant, took him home,  
And fed, and cherish'd him, and saved his life.  
I ask you now, should this first master claim

His service, whom does it belong to ? him  
Who thrust him out, or him who saved his life ?'

This question, so flung down before the guests,  
And balanced either way by each, at length  
When some were doubtful how the law would hold,  
Was handed over by consent of all  
To one who had not spoken, Lionel.

Fair speech was his, and delicate of phrase.  
And he beginning languidly—his loss  
Weigh'd on him yet—but warming as he went,  
Glanced at the point of law, to pass it by,  
Affirming that as long as either lived,  
By all the laws of love and gratefulness,  
The service of the one so saved was due  
All to the saver—adding, with a smile,  
The first for many weeks—a semi-smile  
As at a strong conclusion—'body and soul  
And life and limbs, all his to work his will.'

Then Julian made a secret sign to me  
To bring Camilla down before them all.  
And crossing her own picture as she came,  
And looking as much lovelier as herself  
Is lovelier than all others—on her head  
A diamond circlet, and from under this

A veil, that seemed no more than gilded air,  
Flying by each fine ear, an Eastern gauze  
With seeds of gold—so, with that grace of hers,  
Slow-moving as a wave against the wind,  
That flings a mist behind it in the sun—  
And bearing high in arms the mighty babe,  
The younger Julian, who himself was crown'd  
With roses, none so rosy as himself—  
And over all her babe and her the jewels  
Of many generations of his house  
Sparkled and flash'd, for he had decked them out  
As for a solemn sacrifice of love—  
So she came in :—I am long in telling it,  
I never yet beheld a thing so strange,  
Sad, sweet, and strange together—floated in—  
While all the guests in mute amazement rose—  
And slowly pacing to the middle hall,  
Before the board, there paused and stood, her  
breast  
Hard-heaving, and her eyes upon her feet,  
Not daring yet to glance at Lionel.  
But him she carried, him nor lights nor feast  
Dazed or amazed, nor eyes of men ; who cared  
Only to use his own, and staring wide  
And hungering for the gilt and jewell'd world  
About him, look'd, as he is like to prove,  
When Julian goes, the lord of all he saw.



‘My guests,’ said Julian : ‘you are honour’d now  
Ev’n to the uttermost : in her behold  
Of all my treasures the most beautiful,  
Of all things upon earth the dearest to me.’  
Then waving us a sign to seat ourselves,  
Led his dear lady to a chair of state.  
And I, by Lionel sitting, saw his face  
Fire, and dead ashes and all fire again  
Thrice in a second, felt him tremble too,  
And heard him muttering, ‘So like, so like ;  
She never had a sister. I knew none.  
Some cousin of his and hers—O God, so like !’  
And then he suddenly ask’d her if she were.  
She shook, and cast her eyes down, and was dumb.  
And then some other question’d if she came  
From foreign lands, and still she did not speak.  
Another, if the boy were hers : but she  
To all their queries answer’d not a word,  
Which made the amazement more, till one of them  
Said, shuddering, ‘Her spectre !’ But his friend  
Replied, in half a whisper, ‘Not at least  
The spectre that will speak if spoken to.  
Terrible pity, if one so beautiful  
Prove, as I almost dread to find her, dumb !’

But Julian, sitting by her, answer’d all :  
‘She is but dumb, because in her you see

That faithful servant whom we spoke about,  
Obedient to her second master now ;  
Which will not last. I have here to-night a guest  
So bound to me by common love and loss—  
What ! shall I bind him more ? in his behalf,  
Shall I exceed the Persian, giving him  
That which of all things is the dearest to me,  
Not only showing ? and he himself pronounced  
That my rich gift is wholly mine to give.

‘ Now all be dumb, and promise all of you  
Not to break in on what I say by word  
Or whisper, while I show you all my heart.’  
And then began the story of his love  
As here to-day, but not so wordily—  
The passionate moment would not suffer that—  
Past thro’ his visions to the burial ; thence  
Down to this last strange hour in his own hall ;  
And then rose up, and with him all his guests  
Once more as by enchantment ; all but he,  
Lionel, who fain had risen, but fell again,  
And sat as if in chains—to whom he said :

‘ Take my free gift, my cousin, for your wife ;  
And were it only for the giver’s sake,  
And tho’ she seem so like the one you lost,  
Yet cast her not away so suddenly,

Lest there be none left here to bring her back :  
I leave this land for ever.' Here he ceased.

Then taking his dear lady by one hand,  
And bearing on one arm the noble babe,  
He slowly brought them both to Lionel.  
And there the widower husband and dead wife  
Rush'd each at each with a cry, that rather seem'd  
For some new death than for a life renew'd ;  
Whereat the very babe began to wail ;  
At once they turn'd, and caught and brought him in  
To their charm'd circle, and, half killing him  
With kisses, round him closed and claspt again.  
But Lionel, when at last he freed himself  
From wife and child, and lifted up a face  
All over glowing with the sun of life,  
And love, and boundless thanks—the sight of this  
So frightened our good friend, that turning to me  
And saying, 'It is over : let us go'—  
There were our horses ready at the doors—  
We bad them no farewell, but mounting these  
He past for ever from his native land ;  
And I with him, my Julian, back to mine.



BALLADS  
AND OTHER POEMS



TO  
ALFRED TENNYSON

MY GRANDSON.

GOLDEN-HAIR'D Ally whose name is one with mine,  
Crazy with laughter and babble and earth's new wine,  
Now that the flower of a year and a half is thine,  
O little blossom, O mine, and mine of mine,  
Glorious poet who never hast written a line,  
Laugh, for the name at the head of my verse is thine.  
May'st thou never be wrong'd by the name that is mine !





## THE FIRST QUARREL.

(IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT.)

### I.

‘WAIT a little,’ you say, ‘you are sure it ’ll all come right,’

But the boy was born i’ trouble, an’ looks so wan an’ so white :

Wait ! an’ once I ha’ waited—I hadn’t to wait for long.

Now I wait, wait, wait for Harry.—No, no, you are doing me wrong !

Harry and I were married : the boy can hold up his head,

The boy was born in wedlock, but after my man was dead ;

I ha’ work’d for him fifteen years, an’ I work an’ I wait to the end.

I am all alone in the world, an’ you are my only friend.

## II.

Doctor, if *you* can wait, I'll tell you the tale o' my life.  
When Harry an' I were children, he call'd me his own  
    little wife ;  
I was happy when I was with him, an' sorry when he  
    was away,  
An' when we play'd together, I loved him better than  
    play ;  
He workt me the daisy chain—he made me the cowslip  
    ball,  
He fought the boys that were rude, an' I loved him  
    better than all.  
Passionate girl tho' I was, an' often at home in disgrace,  
I never could quarrel with Harry—I had but to look  
    in his face.

## III.

There was a farmer in Dorset of Harry's kin, that had  
    need  
Of a good stout lad at his farm ; he sent, an' the father  
    agreed ;  
So Harry was bound to the Dorsetshire farm for years  
    an' for years ;

I walked with him down to the quay, poor lad, an' we  
parted in tears.  
The boat was beginning to move, we heard them a-  
ringing the bell,  
'I'll never love any but you, God bless you, my own  
little Nell.'

## IV.

I was a child, an' he was a child, an' he came to harm;  
There was a girl, a hussy, that workt with him up at  
the farm,  
One had deceived her an' left her alone with her sin  
an' her shame,  
And so she was wicked with Harry; the girl was the  
most to blame.

## V.

And years went over till I that was little had grown so  
tall,  
The men would say of the maids, 'Our Nelly's the  
flower of 'em all.'  
I didn't take heed o' *them*, but I taught myself all I  
could  
To make a good wife for Harry, when Harry came  
home for good.

## VI.

Often I seem'd unhappy, and often as happy too,  
For I heard it abroad in the fields 'I'll never love any  
but you ;'  
'I'll never love any but you' the morning song of the  
lark,  
'I'll never love any but you' the nightingale's hymn in  
the dark.

## VII.

And Harry came home at last, but he look'd at me  
sidelong and shy,  
Vext me a bit, till he told me that so many years had  
gone by,  
I had grown so handsome and tall—that I might ha'  
forgot him somehow—  
For he thought—there were other lads—he was fear'd  
to look at me now.

## VIII.

Hard was the frost in the field, we were married o'  
Christmas day,  
Married among the red berries, an' all as merry as May —  
'Those were the pleasant times, my house an' my man  
were my pride,  
We seem'd like ships i' the Channel a-sailing with wind  
an' tide.

## IX.

But work was scant in the Isle, tho' he tried the villages  
round,  
So Harry went over the Solent to see if work could be  
found ;  
An' he wrote ' I ha' six weeks' work, little wife, so far  
as I know ;  
I'll come for an hour to-morrow, an' kiss you before  
I go.'

## X.

So I set to righting the house, for wasn't he coming  
that day ?  
An' I hit on an old deal-box that was push'd in a  
corner away,  
It was full of old odds an' ends, an' a letter along wi'  
the rest,  
I had better ha' put my naked hand in a hornets' nest.

## XI.

'Sweetheart'—this was the letter—this was the letter  
I read —  
'You promised to find me work near you, an' I wish  
I was dead —

Didn't you kiss me an' promise? you haven't done it,  
my lad,  
An' I almost died o' your going away, an' I wish that  
I had.'

## XII.

I too wish that I had—in the pleasant times that had  
past,  
Before I quarrell'd with Harry—*my* quarrel—the first  
an' the last.

## XIII.

For Harry came in, an' I flung him the letter that  
drove me wild,  
An' he told it me all at once, as simple as any child,  
'What can it matter, my lass, what I did wi' my single  
life?  
I ha' been as true to you as ever a man to his wife;  
An' *she* wasn't one o' the worst.' 'Then,' I said, 'I'm  
none o' the best.'  
An' he smiled at me, 'Ain't you, my love? Come,  
come, little wife, let it rest!  
The man isn't like the woman, no need to make such  
a stir.'  
But he anger'd me all the more, an' I said 'You were  
keeping with her,

When I was a-loving you all along an' the same as  
before.'

An' he didn't speak for a while, an' he anger'd me  
more and more.

Then he patted my hand in his gentle way, 'Let by-  
gones be!'

'Bygones! you kept yours hush'd,' I said, 'when you  
married me!'

By-gones ma' be come-agains; an' *she*—in her shame  
an' her sin—

You'll have her to nurse my child, if I die o' my lying in!

You'll make her its second mother! I hate her—an'

I hate you!'

Ah, Harry, my man, you had better ha' beaten me  
black an' blue

Than ha' spoken as kind as you did, when I were so  
crazy wi' spite,

'Wait a little, my lass, I am sure it 'ill all come right.

## XIV.

An' he took three turns in the rain, an' I watch'd him,  
an' when he came in

I felt that my heart was hard, he was all wet thro' to  
the skin,

An' I never said 'off wi' the wet,' I never said 'on wi'  
the dry,'

So I knew my heart was hard, when he came to bid  
me goodbye.

‘You said that you hated me, Ellen, but that isn’t  
true, you know ;

I am going to leave you a bit—you’ll kiss me before  
I go?’

## XV.

‘Going! you’re going to her—kiss her—if you will,’  
I said,—

I was near my time wi’ the boy, I must ha’ been light  
i’ my head—

‘I had sooner be cursed than kiss’d!’—I didn’t know  
well what I meant,

But I turn’d my face from *him*, an’ he turn’d *his* face  
an’ he went.

## XVI.

And then he sent me a letter, ‘I’ve gotten my work  
to do ;

You wouldn’t kiss me, my lass, an’ I never loved any  
but you ;

I am sorry for all the quarrel an’ sorry for what she  
wrote,

I ha’ six weeks’ work in Jersey an’ go to-night by the  
boat.’



## XVII.

An' the wind began to rise, an' I thought of him out  
at sea,

An' I felt I had been to blame ; he was always kind  
to me.

'Wait a little, my lass, I am sure it 'ill all come right'—

An' the boat went down that night—the boat went  
down that night.

## RIZPAH.

17—.

### I.

WAILING, wailing, wailing, the wind over land and sea—  
And Willy's voice in the wind, 'O mother, come out  
to me.'

Why should he call me to-night, when he knows that  
I cannot go?

For the downs are as bright as day, and the full moon  
stares at the snow.

### II.

We should be seen, my dear; they would spy us out  
of the town.

The loud black nights for us, and the storm rushing  
over the down,

When I cannot see my own hand, but am led by the  
creak of the chain,

And grovel and grope for my son till I find myself  
drenched with the rain.

## III.

Anything fallen again? nay—what was there left to fall?

I have taken them home, I have number'd the bones,  
I have hidden them all.

What am I saying? and what are *you*? do you come  
as a spy?

Falls? what falls? who knows? As the tree falls so  
must it lie.

## IV.

Who let her in? how long has she been? you—what  
have you heard?

Why did you sit so quiet? you never have spoken a  
word.

O—to pray with me—yes—a lady—none of their  
spies—

But the night has crept into my heart, and begun to  
darken my eyes.

## V.

Ah—you, that have lived so soft, what should *you*  
know of the night,

The blast and the burning shame and the bitter frost  
and the fright?

I have done it, while you were asleep—you were only  
made for the day.

I have gather'd my baby together—and now you may  
go your way.

## VI.

Nay—for it's kind of you, Madam, to sit by an old  
dying wife.

But say nothing hard of my boy, I have only an hour  
of life.

I kiss'd my boy in the prison, before he went out to die.  
'They dared me to do it,' he said, and he never has  
told me a lie.

I whipt him for robbing an orchard once when he was  
but a child—

'The farmer dared me to do it,' he said ; he was always  
so wild—

And idle—and couldn't be idle—my Willy—he never  
could rest.

The King should have made him a soldier, he would  
have been one of his best.

## VII.

But he lived with a lot of wild mates, and they never  
would let him be good ;

They swore that he dare not rob the mail, and he  
swore that he would ;

And he took no life, but he took one purse, and when  
all was done  
He flung it among his fellows—I'll none of it, said my  
son.

## VIII.

I came into court to the Judge and the lawyers. I  
told them my tale,  
God's own truth—but they kill'd him, they kill'd him  
for robbing the mail.  
They hang'd him in chains for a show—we had always  
borne a good name—  
To be hang'd for a thief—and then put away—isn't  
that enough shame?  
Dust to dust—low down—let us hide! but they set  
him so high  
That all the ships of the world could stare at him,  
passing by.  
God 'ill pardon the hell-black raven and horrible fowls  
of the air,  
But not the black heart of the lawyer who kill'd him  
and hang'd him there.

## IX.

And the jailer forced me away. I had bid him my  
last goodbye ;  
They had fasten'd the door of his cell. 'O mother !'  
I heard him cry.

I couldn't get back tho' I tried, he had something  
further to say,  
And now I never shall know it. The jailer forced  
me away.

## X.

Then since I couldn't but hear that cry of my boy  
that was dead,  
They seized me and shut me up: they fasten'd me  
down on my bed.  
'Mother, O mother!'—he call'd in the dark to me  
year after year—  
They beat me for that, they beat me—you know that  
I couldn't but hear;  
And then at the last they found I had grown so stupid  
and still  
They let me abroad again—but the creatures had  
worked their will.

## XI.

Flesh of my flesh was gone, but bone of my bone was  
left—  
I stole them all from the lawyers—and you, will you  
call it a theft?—  
My baby, the bones that had suck'd me, the bones  
that had laughed and had cried—  
Theirs? O no! they are mine—not theirs—they  
had moved in my side.

## XII.

Do you think I was scared by the bones? I kiss'd  
'em, I buried 'em all—

I can't dig deep, I am old—in the night by the church-  
yard wall.

My Willy 'ill rise up whole when the trumpet of judg-  
ment 'ill sound,

But I charge you never to say that I laid him in holy  
ground.

## XIII.

They would scratch him up—they would hang him  
again on the cursed tree.

Sin? O yes—we are sinners, I know—let all that be,  
And read me a Bible verse of the Lord's good will  
toward men—

'Full of compassion and mercy, the Lord'—let me  
hear it again;

'Full of compassion and mercy—long-suffering.'  
Yes, O yes!

For the lawyer is born but to murder—the Saviour  
lives but to bless.

*He'll* never put on the black cap except for the worst  
of the worst,

And the first may be last—I have heard it in church  
—and the last may be first.

Suffering—O long-suffering—yes, as the Lord must  
know,  
Year after year in the mist and the wind and the shower  
and the snow.

## XIV.

Heard, have you ? what ? they have told you he never  
repented his sin.  
How do they know it ? are *they* his mother ? are *you*  
of his kin ?  
Heard ! have you ever heard, when the storm on the  
downs began,  
The wind that 'ill wail like a child and the sea that  
'ill moan like a man ?

## XV.

Election, Election and Reprobation—it's all very well.  
But I go to-night to my boy, and I shall not find him  
in Hell.  
For I cared so much for my boy that the Lord has  
look'd into my care,  
And He means me I'm sure to be happy with Willy,  
I know not where.

## XVI.

And if *he* be lost—but to save *my* soul, that is all  
your desire :



Do you think that I care for *my* soul if my boy be  
gone to the fire?

I have been with God in the dark—go, go, you may  
leave me alone—

You never have borne a child—you are just as hard  
as a stone.

## XVII.

Madam, I beg your pardon! I think that you mean  
to be kind,

But I cannot hear what you say for my Willy's voice  
in the wind—

The snow and the sky so bright—he used but to call  
in the dark,

And he calls to me now from the church and not from  
the gibbet—for hark!

Nay—you can hear it yourself—it is coming—shaking  
the walls—

Willy—the moon's in a cloud——Good night. I am  
going. He calls.

## THE NORTHERN COBBLER.

### I.

WAÄIT till our Sally cooms in, fur thou mun a' sights<sup>1</sup>  
to tell.

Eh, but I be maäin glad to seeä tha sa 'arty an' well.

'Cast awaäy on a disolut land wi' a vartical soon<sup>2</sup>!'

Strange fur to goä fur to think what saäilors a' seëan  
an' a' doon ;~

'Summat to drink—sa' 'ot?' I 'a nowt but Adam's  
wine :

What's the 'eät o' this little 'ill-side to the 'eät o' the  
line?

### II.

'What's i' tha bottle a-stanning theer?' I'll tell tha.  
Gin.

<sup>1</sup> The vowels *ai*, pronounced separately though in the closest conjunction, best render the sound of the long *i* and *y* in this dialect. But since such words as *craäin'*, *daäin'*, *whai*, *ai* (I), etc., look awkward except in a page of express phonetics, I have thought it better to leave the simple *i* and *y*, and to trust that my readers will give them the broader pronunciation.

<sup>2</sup> The *oo* short, as in 'wood.'

But if thou wants thy grog, tha mun goä fur it down  
to the inn.

Naay—fur I be maäin-glad, but thaw tha was iver sa  
dry,

Thou gits naw gin fro' the bottle theer, an' I'll tell  
tha why.

## III.

Meä an' thy sister was married, when wur it? back-end  
o' June,

Ten year sin', and wa 'greed as well as a fiddle i'  
tune :

I could fettle and clump owd booöts and shoes wi' the  
best on 'em all,

As fer as fro' Thursby thurn hup to Harmsby and  
Hutterby Hall.

We was busy as beeäs i' the bloom an' as 'appy as  
'art could think,

An' then the babby wur burn, and then I taäkes to  
the drink.

## IV.

An' I weänt gaäinsaäy it, my lad, thaw I be hafe  
shaämed on it now,

We could sing a good song at the Plow, we could sing  
a good song at the Plow ;

Thaw once of a frosty night I slither'd an' hurted my  
 huck,<sup>1</sup>  
 An' I coom'd neck-an-crop soomtimes slaäpe down i'  
 the squad an' the muck :  
 An' once I fowt wi' the Taäilor—not hafe ov a man,  
 my lad—  
 Fur he scrawm'd an' scratted my faäce like a cat, an'  
 it maäde 'er sa mad  
 That Sally she turn'd a tongue-banger,<sup>2</sup> an' raäted ma,  
 'Sottin' thy braäins  
 Guzzlin' an' soäkin' an' smoäkin' an' hawmin'<sup>3</sup> about  
 i' the laänes,  
 Soä sow-droonk that tha doesn not touch thy 'at to  
 the Squire ;<sup>4</sup>  
 An' I looök'd cock-eyed at my noäse an' I seeäd 'im  
 a-gittin' o' fire ;  
 But sin' I wur hallus i' liquor an' hallus as droonk as  
 a king,  
 Foäls' coostom flitted awaäy like a kite wi' a brokken  
 string.

## v.

An' Sally she wesh'd foäls' cloäths to keep the wolf  
 fro' the door,  
 Eh but the moor she riled me, she druv me to drink  
 the moor,

<sup>1</sup> Hip.<sup>2</sup> Scold.<sup>3</sup> Lounging.

Fur I fun', when 'er back wur turn'd, wheer Sally's  
 owd stockin' wur 'id,  
 An' I grabb'd the munny she maäde, and I weär'd it  
 o' liquor, I did.

## VI.

An' one night I cooms 'oäm like a bull gotten loose at  
 a faäir,  
 An' she wur a-waäitin' fo'mma, an' cryin' and teärin'  
 'er 'aäir,  
 An' I tummled athurt the craädle an' sweär'd as I'd  
 breäk ivry stick  
 O' furnitur 'ere i' the 'ouse, an' I gied our Sally a kick,  
 An' I mash'd the taäbles an' chairs, an' she an' the  
 babby beäl'd,<sup>1</sup>  
 Fur I knaw'd naw moor what I did nor a mortal beäst  
 o' the feäld.

## VII.

An' when I waäked i' the murnin' I seeäd that our  
 Sally went laämed  
 Cos' o' the kick as I gied 'er, an' I wur dreädful  
 ashaämed;  
 An' Sally wur sloomy<sup>2</sup> an' draggel taäl'd in an owd  
 turn gown,  
 An' the babby's faäce wurn't wesh'd an' the 'ole 'ouse  
 hupside down.

<sup>1</sup> Bellowed, cried out.<sup>2</sup> 'Sluggish, out of spirits.

## VIII.

An' then I minded our Sally sa pratty an' neät an'  
sweeät,  
Straät as a pole an' cleän as a flower fro' 'eäd to feeät :  
An' then I minded the fust kiss I gied 'er by Thursby  
thurn ;  
Theer wur a lark a-singin' 'is best of a Sunday at  
murn,  
Couldn't see 'im, we 'eärd 'im a-mountin' oop 'igher  
an' 'igher,  
An' then 'e turn'd to the sun, an' 'e shined like a  
sparkle o' fire.  
'Doesn't tha see 'im,' she axes, 'fur I can see 'im?'  
an' I  
Secääd nobbut the smile o' the sun as danced in 'er  
pratty blue eye ;  
An' I says 'I mun gie tha a kiss,' an' Sally says 'Noä,  
thou moänt,'  
But I gied 'er a kiss, an' then anoother, an' Sally says  
'doänt !'

## IX.

An' when we coom'd into Meeätin', at fust she wur all  
in a tew,  
But, arter, we sing'd the 'ymn togither like birds on a  
beugh ;

An' Muggins 'e preäch'd o' Hell-fire an' the loov o'  
God fur men,  
An' then upo' coomin' awaäy Sally gied me a kiss ov  
'ersen.

## X.

Heer wur a fall fro' a kiss to a kick like Saätan as fell  
Down out o' heaven i' Hell-fire—thaw theer's naw  
drinkin' i' Hell;  
Meä fur to kick our Sally as kep the wolf fro' the  
door,  
All along o' the drink, fur I loov'd 'er as well as afoor.

## XI.

Sa like a greät num-cumpus I blubber'd awaäy o' the  
bed—  
'Weänt niver do it naw moor;' an' Sally looökt up  
an' she said,  
'I'll upowd it<sup>1</sup> tha weänt; thou'rt like the rest o' the  
men,  
Thou'll goä sniffin' about the tap till tha does it  
agëan.  
Theer's thy hennemy, man, an' I knaws, as knaws tha  
sa well,  
That, if tha seeäs 'im an' smells 'im tha'll foller 'im  
slick into Hell.'

<sup>1</sup> I'll uphold it.

## XII.

‘Naäy,’ says I, ‘fur I weänt goä sniffin’ about the tap.’  
‘Weänt tha?’ she says, an’ mysen I thowt i’ mysen  
‘mayhap.’

‘Noä:’ an’ I started awaäy like a shot, an’ down to  
the Hinn,  
An’ I browt what tha seeäs stannin’ theer, yon big black  
bottle o’ gin.

## XIII.

‘That caps owt,’<sup>1</sup> says Sally, an’ saw she begins to cry,  
But I puts it inter ’er ’ands an’ I says to ’er, ‘Sally,’  
says I,

‘Stan’ ’im theer i’ the naäme o’ the Lord an’ the power  
ov ’is Graäce,

Stan’ ’im theer, fur I’ll looök my hennemy straït i’  
the faäce,

Stan’ ’im theer i’ the winder, an’ let ma looök at ’im then,  
’E seeäms naw moor nor watter, an’ ’e’s the Divil’s oän  
sen.’

## XIV.

An’ I wur down i’ tha mouth, couldn’t do naw work  
an’ all,

Nasty an’ snaggy an’ shaäky, an’ poonch’d my ’and  
wi’ the hawl,

<sup>1</sup> That’s beyond everything.



But she wur a power o' coomfut, an' sattled 'ersen o'  
my knee,  
An' coäxd an' coodled me oop till ageän I feel'd mysen  
free.

## XV.

An' Sally she tell'd it about, an' foälk stood a-  
gawmin'<sup>1</sup> in,  
As thaw it wur summat bewitch'd istancead of a quart o'  
gin ;  
An' some on 'em said it wur watter —an' I wur chousin'  
the wife,  
Fur I couldn't 'owd 'ands off gin, wur it nobbut to  
saäve my life ;  
An' blacksmith 'e strips me the thick ov 'is airm, an'  
'e shaws it to me,  
'Feéal thou this ! thou can't graw this upo' watter !'  
says he.  
An' Doctor 'e calls o' Sunday an' just as candles was  
lit,  
'Thou moänt do it,' he says, 'tha mun breäk 'im off  
bit by bit.'  
'Thou'rt but a Methody-man,' says Parson, and laäys  
down 'is 'at,  
An' 'e points to the bottle o' gin, 'but I respecks tha  
fur that ;'

<sup>1</sup> Staring vacantly.

An' Squire, his oän very sen, walks down fro' the 'All  
to see,  
An' 'e spanks 'is 'and into mine, 'fur I respecks tha,'  
says 'e ;  
An' coostom ageän draw'd in like a wind fro' far an'  
wide,  
And browt me the booöts to be cobbled fro' hafe the  
coontryside.

## XVI.

An' theer 'e stans an' theer 'e shall stan to my dying  
daäy ;  
I 'a gotten to loov 'im ageän in anoother kind of a  
waäy,  
Proud on 'im, like, my lad, an' I keeäps 'im cleän an'  
bright,  
Loovs 'im, an' roobs 'im, an' doosts 'im, an' puts 'im  
back i' the light.

## XVII.

Wouldn't a pint a' sarved as well as a quart? Naw  
doubt :  
But I liked a bigger feller to fight wi' an' fowt it out.  
Fine an' meller 'e mun be by this, if I cared to taäste,  
But I moänt, my lad, and I weänt, fur I'd feäl mysen  
cleän disgräaced.

## XVIII.

An' once I said to the Missis, 'My lass, when I cooms  
to die,  
Smash the bottle to smithers, the Divil's in 'im,' said I.  
But arter I chaänged my mind, an' if Sally be left  
aloän,  
I'll hev 'im a-buried wi'mma an' taäke 'im afoor the  
Throän.

## XIX.

Coom thou 'eer—yon läädy a-steppin' along the streeät,  
Doesn't tha know 'er—sa pratty, an' feät, an' neät, an'  
sweeät?  
Look at the cloüths on 'er back, thebbe ammost spick-  
span-new,  
An' Tommy's faäce be as fresh as a codlin wesh'd i'  
the dew.

## XX.

'Ere be our Sally an' Tommy, an' we be a-goin to dine,  
Baäcon an' taätes, an' a beslings puddin'<sup>1</sup> an' Adam's  
wine;  
But if tha wants ony grog tha mun goä fur it down to  
the Hinn,  
Fur I weänt shed a drop on 'is blood, noä, not fur  
Sally's oän kin.

<sup>1</sup> A pudding made with the first milk of the cow after calving.

## THE REVENGE.

### A BALLAD OF THE FLEET.

#### I.

AT FLORES in the Azores Sir Richard Grenville lay,  
And a pinnace, like a flutter'd bird, came flying from  
far away :

'Spanish ships of war at sea ! we have sighted fifty-  
three !'

Then sware Lord Thomas Howard : 'Fore God I  
am no coward ;

But I cannot meet them here, for my ships are out of  
gear,

And the half my men are sick. I must fly, but follow  
quick.

We are six ships of the line ; can we fight with fifty-  
three ?'

#### II.

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville : 'I know you are  
no coward ;

You fly them for a moment to fight with them again.

But I've ninety men and more that are lying sick  
ashore.

I should count myself the coward if I left them, my  
Lord Howard,

'To these Inquisition dogs and the devildoms of Spain.'

## III.

So Lord Howard past away with five ships of war that  
day,

Till he melted like a cloud in the silent summer  
heaven ;

But Sir Richard bore in hand all his sick men from  
the land

Very carefully and slow,

Men of Bideford in Devon,

And we laid them on the ballast down below ;

For we brought them all aboard,

And they blest him in their pain, that they were not  
left to Spain,

To the thumbscrew and the stake, for the glory of the  
Lord

## IV.

He had only a hundred seamen to work the ship and  
to fight,

And he sailed away from Flores till the Spaniard came  
in sight,

With his huge sea-castles heaving upon the weather  
bow.

‘Shall we fight or shall we fly?

Good Sir Richard, tell us now,

For to fight is but to die!

There’ll be little of us left by the time this sun be set.’

And Sir Richard said again: ‘We be all good English  
men.

Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the children of the  
devil,

For I never turn’d my back upon Don or devil yet.’

V.

Sir Richard spoke and he laugh’d, and we roar’d a  
hurrah, and so

The little Revenge ran on sheer into the heart of the  
foe,

With her hundred fighters on deck, and her ninety  
sick below;

For half of their fleet to the right and half to the left  
were seen,

And the little Revenge ran on thro’ the long sea-lane  
between.

VI.

Thousands of their soldiers look’d down from their  
decks and laugh’d,

Thousands of their seamen made mock at the mad  
little craft

Running on and on, till delay'd

By their mountain-like San Philip that, of fifteen  
hundred tons,

And up-shadowing high above us with her yawning  
tiers of guns,

Took the breath from our sails, and we stay'd.

## VII.

And while now the great San Philip hung above us  
like a cloud

Whence the thunderbolt will fall

Long and loud,

Four galleons drew away

From the Spanish fleet that day,

And two upon the larboard and two upon the star-  
board lay,

And the battle-thunder broke from them all.

## VIII.

But anon the great San Philip, she bethought herself  
and went

Having that within her womb that had left her ill  
content ;

And the rest they came aboard us, and they fought  
us hand to hand,  
For a dozen times they came with their pikes and  
musqueteers,  
And a dozen times we shook 'em off as a dog that  
shakes his ears  
When he leaps from the water to the land.

## IX.

And the sun went down, and the stars came out far  
over the summer sea,  
But never a moment ceased the fight of the one and  
the fifty-three.  
Ship after ship, the whole night long, their high-built  
galleons came,  
Ship after ship, the whole night long, with her battle-  
thunder and flame ;  
Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew back with  
her dead and her shame.  
For some were sunk and many were shatter'd, and  
so could fight us no more—  
God of battles, was ever a battle like this in the world  
before ?

## X.

For he said ' Fight on ! fight on !'  
Tho' his vessel was all but a wreck ;



And it chanced that, when half of the short summer  
night was gone,  
With a grisly wound to be drest he had left the  
deck,  
But a bullet struck him that was dressing it suddenly  
dead,  
And himself he was wounded again in the side and  
the head,  
And he said 'Fight on ! fight on !'

## XI.

And the night went down, and the sun smiled out far  
over the summer sea,  
And the Spanish fleet with broken sides lay round us  
all in a ring ;  
But they dared not touch us again, for they fear'd that  
we still could sting,  
So they watch'd what the end would be.  
And we had not fought them in vain,  
But in perilous plight were we,  
Seeing forty of our poor hundred were slain,  
And half of the rest of us maim'd for life  
In the crash of the cannonades and the desperate  
strife ;  
And the sick men down in the hold were most of  
them stark and cold,

And the pikes were all broken or bent, and the powder  
was all of it spent ;  
And the masts and the rigging were lying over the  
side ;  
But Sir Richard cried in his English pride,  
‘ We have fought such a fight for a day and a night  
As may never be fought again !  
We have won great glory, my men !  
And a day less or more  
At sea or ashore,  
We die—does it matter when ?  
Sink me the ship, Master Gunner—sink her, split her  
in twain !  
Fall into the hands of God, not into the hands of  
Spain !’

## XII.

And the gunner said ‘ Ay, ay,’ but the seamen made  
reply :  
‘ We have children, we have wives,  
And the Lord hath spared our lives.  
We will make the Spaniard promise, if we yield, to let  
us go ;  
We shall live to fight again and to strike another  
blow.’  
And the lion there lay dying, and they yielded to the  
foe.

## XIII.

And the stately Spanish men to their flagship bore  
him then,  
Where they laid him by the mast, old Sir Richard  
caught at last,  
And they praised him to his face with their courtly  
foreign grace ;  
But he rose upon their decks, and he cried :  
' I have fought for Queen and Faith like a valiant man  
and true ;  
I have only done my duty as a man is bound to do :  
With a joyful spirit I Sir Richard Grenville die !'  
And he fell upon their decks, and he died.

## XIV.

And they stared at the dead that had been so valiant  
and true,  
And had holden the power and glory of Spain so  
cheap  
That he dared her with one little ship and his English  
few ;  
Was he devil or man ? He was devil for aught they  
knew,  
But they sank his body with honour down into the  
deep,

And they mann'd the Revenge with a swarthier alien  
crew,  
And away she sail'd with her loss and long'd for her  
own ;  
When a wind from the lands they had ruin'd awoke  
from sleep,  
And the water began to heave and the weather to  
moan,  
And or ever that evening ended a great gale blew,  
And a wave like the wave that is raised by an earth-  
quake grew,  
Till it smote on their hulls and their sails and their  
masts and their flags,  
And the whole sea plunged and fell on the shot-  
shatter'd navy of Spain,  
And the little Revenge herself went down by the  
island crags  
To be lost evermore in the main.

## THE SISTERS.

THEY have left the doors ajar ; and by their clash,  
And prelude on the keys, I know the song,  
Their favourite – which I call ‘The Tables Turned.’  
Evelyn begins it ‘O diviner Air.’

### EVELYN.

O diviner Air,  
Thro’ the heat, the drowth, the dust, the glare,  
Far from out the west in shadowing showers,  
Over all the meadow baked and bare,  
Making fresh and fair  
All the bowers and the flowers,  
Fainting flowers, faded bowers,  
Over all this weary world of ours,  
Breathe, diviner Air !

A sweet voice that you scarce could better that.  
Now follows Edith echoing Evelyn.

EDITH.

O diviner light,  
Thro' the cloud that roofs our noon with night,  
Thro' the blotting mist, the blinding showers,  
Far from out a sky for ever bright,  
Over all the woodland's flooded bowers,  
Over all the meadow's drowning flowers,  
Over all this ruin'd world of ours,  
Break, diviner light !

Marvellously like, their voices—and themselves !  
Tho' one is somewhat deeper than the other,  
As one is somewhat graver than the other—  
Edith than Evelyn. Your good Uncle, whom  
You count the father of your fortune, longs  
For this alliance : let me ask you then,  
Which voice most takes you ? for I do not doubt  
Being a watchful parent, you are taken  
With one or other : tho' sometimes I fear  
You may be flickering, fluttering in a doubt  
Between the two—which must not be—which might  
Be death to one : they both are beautiful :  
Evelyn is gayer, wittier, prettier, says  
The common voice, if one may trust it : she ?  
No ! but the paler and the graver, Edith.  
Woo her and gain her then : no wavering, boy !

The graver is perhaps the one for you  
Who jest and laugh so easily and so well.  
For love will go by contrast, as by likes.

No sisters ever prized each other more.  
Not so : their mother and her sister loved  
More passionately still.

But that my best  
And oldest friend, your Uncle, wishes it,  
And that I know you worthy everyway  
To be my son, I might, perchance, be loath  
To part them, or part from them : and yet one  
Should marry, or all the broad lands in your view  
From this bay window—which our house has held  
Three hundred years—will pass collaterally.

My father with a child on either knee,  
A hand upon the head of either child,  
Smoothing their locks, as golden as his own  
Were silver, 'get them wedded' would he say.  
And once my prattling Edith ask'd him 'why?'  
Ay, why? said he, 'for why should I go lame?'  
Then told them of his wars, and of his wound.  
For see—this wine—the grape from whence it flow'd  
Was blackening on the slopes of Portugal,  
When that brave soldier, down the terrible ridge  
Plunged in the last fierce charge at Waterloo,

And caught the laming bullet. He left me this,  
Which yet retains a memory of its youth,  
As I of mine, and my first passion. Come !  
Here's to your happy union with my child !

Yet must you change your name : no fault of mine !  
You say that you can do it as willingly  
As birds make ready for their bridal-time  
By change of feather : for all that, my boy,  
Some birds are sick and sullen when they moult.  
An old and worthy name ! but mine that stirr'd  
Among our civil wars and earlier too  
Among the Roses, the more venerable.  
*I* care not for a name—no fault of mine.  
Once more—a happier marriage than my 'own !

You see yon Lombard poplar on the plain.  
The highway running by it leaves a breadth  
Of sward to left and right, where, long ago,  
One bright May morning in a world of song,  
I lay at leisure, watching overhead  
The aërial poplar wave, an amber spire.

I dozed ; I woke. An open landaulet  
Whirl'd by, which, after it had past me, show'd  
Turning my way, the loveliest face on earth.  
The face of one there sitting opposite,



On whom I brought a strange unhappiness,  
That time I did not see.

Love at first sight  
May seem—with goodly rhyme and reason for it—  
Possible—at first glimpse, and for a face  
Gone in a moment—strange. Yet once, when first  
I came on lake Llanberris in the dark,  
A moonless night with storm—one lightning-fork  
Flash'd out the lake ; and tho' I loiter'd there  
The full day after, yet in retrospect  
That less than momentary thunder-sketch  
Of lake and mountain conquers all the day.

The Sun himself has limn'd the face for me.  
Not quite so quickly, no, nor half as well.  
For look you here—the shadows are too deep,  
And like the critic's blurring comment make  
The veriest beauties of the work appear  
The darkest faults : the sweet eyes frown : the lips  
Seem but a gash. My sole memorial  
Of Edith—no, the other,—both indeed.

So that bright face was flash'd thro' sense and  
soul  
And by the poplar vanish'd—to be found  
Long after, as it seem'd, beneath the tall

Tree-bowers, and those long-sweeping beechen boughs  
Of our New Forest. I was there alone :  
The phantom of the whirling landaulet  
For ever past me by : when one quick peal  
Of laughter drew me thro' the glimmering glades  
Down to the snowlike sparkle of a cloth  
On fern and foxglove. Lo, the face again,  
My Rosalind in this Arden—Edith—all  
One bloom of youth, health, beauty, happiness,  
And moved to merriment at a passing jest.

There one of those about her knowing me  
Call'd me to join them ; so with these I spent  
What seem'd my crowning hour, my day of days.

I woo'd her then, nor unsuccessfully,  
The worse for her, for me ! was I content ?  
Ay—no, not quite ; for now and then I thought  
Laziness, vague love-longings, the bright May,  
Had made a heated haze to magnify  
The charm of Edith—that a man's ideal  
Is high in Heaven, and lodged with Plato's God,  
Not findable here—content, and not content,  
In some such fashion as a man may be  
That having had the portrait of his friend  
Drawn by an artist, looks at it, and says,  
'Good ! very like ! not altogether he.'

As yet I had not bound myself by words,  
Only, believing I loved Edith, made  
Edith love *me*. Then came the day when I,  
Flattering myself that all my doubts were fools  
Born of the fool this Age that doubts of all—  
Not I that day of Edith's love or mine—  
Had braced my purpose to declare myself:  
I stood upon the stairs of Paradise.  
The golden gates would open at a word.  
I spoke it—told her of my passion, seen  
And lost and found again, had got so far,  
Had caught her hand, her eyelids fell—I heard  
Wheels, and a noise of welcome at the doors—  
On a sudden after two Italian years  
Had set the blossom of her health again,  
The younger sister, Evelyn, enter'd—there,  
There was the face, and altogether she.  
The mother fell about the daughter's neck,  
The sisters closed in one another's arms,  
Their people throng'd about them from the hall,  
And in the thick of question and reply  
I fled the house, driven by one angel face,  
And all the Furies.

I was bound to her ;  
I could not free myself in honour—bound  
Not by the sounded letter of the word,

But counterpressures of the yielded hand  
That timorously and faintly echoed mine,  
Quick blushes, the sweet dwelling of her eyes  
Upon me when she thought I did not see—  
Were these not bonds? nay, nay, but could I wed her  
Loving the other? do her that great wrong?  
Had I not dream'd I loved her yesternorn?  
Had I not known where Love, at first a fear,  
Grew after marriage to full height and form?  
Yet after marriage, that mock-sister there—  
Brother-in-law—the fiery nearness of it—  
Unlawful and disloyal brotherhood—  
What end but darkness could ensue from this  
For all the three? So Love and Honour jarr'd  
Tho' Love and Honour join'd to raise the full  
High-tide of doubt that sway'd me up and down  
Advancing nor retreating.

Edith wrote :

'My mother bids me ask' (I did not tell you—  
A widow with less guile than many a child.  
God help the wrinkled children that are Christ's  
As well as the plump cheek—she wrought us harm,  
Poor soul, not knowing) 'are you ill?' (so ran  
The letter) 'you have not been here of late.  
You will not find me here. At last I go  
On that long-promised visit to the North.

I told your wayside story to my mother  
And Evelyn. She remembers you. Farewell.  
Pray come and see my mother. Almost blind  
With ever-growing cataract, yet she thinks  
She sees you when she hears. Again farewell.'

Cold words from one I had hoped to warm so far  
That I could stamp my image on her heart !  
'Pray come and see my mother, and farewell.'  
Cold, but as welcome as free airs of heaven  
After a dungeon's closeness. Selfish, strange !  
What dwarfs are men ! my strangled vanity  
Utter'd a stifled cry—to have vexed myself  
And all in vain for her—cold heart or none—  
No bride for me. Yet so my path was clear  
To win the sister.

Whom I woo'd and won.

For Evelyn knew not of my former suit,  
Because the simple mother work'd upon  
By Edith pray'd me not to whisper of it.  
And Edith would be bridesmaid on the day.

But on that day, not being all at ease,  
I from the altar glancing back upon her,  
Before the first 'I will' was utter'd, saw  
The bridesmaid pale, statuelike, passionless—  
'No harm, no harm' I turn'd again, and placed  
My ring upon the finger of my bride.

So, when we parted, Edith spoke no word,  
She wept no tear, but round my Evelyn clung  
In utter silence for so long, I thought  
‘What, will she never set her sister free?’

We left her, happy each in each, and then,  
As tho’ the happiness of each in each  
Were not enough, must fain have torrents, lakes,  
Hills, the great things of Nature and the fair,  
To lift us as it were from commonplace,  
And help us to our joy. Better have sent  
Our Edith thro’ the glories of the earth,  
To change with her horizon, if true Love  
Were not his own imperial all-in-all.

Far off we went. My God, I would not live  
Save that I think this gross hard-seeming world  
Is our misshaping vision of the Powers  
Behind the world, that make our griefs our gains.

For on the dark night of our marriage-day  
The great Tragedian, that had quenched herself  
In that assumption of the bridesmaid—she  
That loved me —our true Edith— her brain broke  
With over-acting, till she rose and fled  
Beneath a pitiless rush of Autumn rain  
To the deaf church—to be let in—to pray

Before *that* altar—so I think ; and there  
They found her beating the hard Protestant doors.  
She died and she was buried ere we knew.

I learnt it first. I had to speak. At once  
The bright quick smile of Evelyn, that had sunn'd  
The morning of our marriage, past away :  
And on our home-return the daily want  
Of Edith in the house, the garden, still  
Haunted us like her ghost ; and by and by,  
Either from that necessity for talk  
Which lives with blindness, or plain innocence  
Of nature, or desire that her lost child  
Should earn from both the praise of heroism,  
The mother broke her promise to the dead,  
And told the living daughter with what love  
Edith had welcomed my brief wooing of her,  
And all her sweet self-sacrifice and death.

Henceforth that mystic bond betwixt the twins—  
Did I not tell you they were twins?—prevail'd  
So far that no caress could win my wife  
Back to that passionate answer of full heart  
I had from her at first. Not that her love,  
Tho' scarce as great as Edith's power of love,  
Had lessen'd, but the mother's garrulous wail  
For ever woke the unhappy Past again,

Till that dead bridesmaid, meant to be my bride,  
Put forth cold hands between us, and I fear'd  
The very fountains of her life were chill'd ;  
So took her thence, and brought her here, and  
here

She bore a child, whom reverently we call'd  
Edith ; and in the second year was born  
A second—this I named from her own self,  
Evelyn ; then two weeks—no more—she joined,  
In and beyond the grave, that one she loved.

Now in this quiet of declining life,  
Thro' dreams by night and trances of the day,  
The sisters glide about me hand in hand,  
Both beautiful alike, nor can I tell  
One from the other, no, nor care to tell  
One from the other, only know they come,  
They smile upon me, till, remembering all  
The love they both have borne me, and the love  
I bore them both—divided as I am  
From either by the stillness of the grave—  
I know not which of these I love the best.

But *you* love Edith ; and her own true eyes  
Are traitors to her ; our quick Evelyn—  
The merrier, prettier, wittier, as they talk,  
And not without good reason, my good son—  
Is yet untouch'd : and I that hold them both



Dearest of all things—well, I am not sure—  
But if there lie a preference eitherway,  
And in the rich vocabulary of Love  
‘Most dearest’ be a true superlative—  
I think *I* likewise love your Edith most.

## THE VILLAGE WIFE ; OR, THE ENTAIL.<sup>1</sup>

### I.

'OUSE-KEEPER sent tha my lass, fur New Squire coom'd  
last night.

Butter an' heggs—yis—yis. I'll goä wi' tha back : all  
right ;

Butter I warrants be prime, an' I warrants the heggs  
be as well,

Hafe a pint o' milk runs out when ya breäks the shell.

### II.

Sit thysen down fur a bit : hev a glass o' cowslip  
wine !

I liked the owd Squire an' 'is gells as thaw they was  
gells o' mine,

Fur then we was all es one, the Squire an' 'is darters  
an' me,

Hall but Miss Annie, the heldest, I niver not took  
to she :

<sup>1</sup> See note to 'Northern Cobbler.'

But Nelly, the last of the cletch,<sup>1</sup> I liked 'er the fust  
on 'em all,

Fur hoffens we talkt o' my darter es died o' the fever  
at fall :

An' I thowt 'twur the will o' the Lord, but Miss Annie  
she said it wur draäins,

Fur she hedn't naw coomfut in 'er, an' arn'd naw  
thanks fur 'er paäins.

Eh ! thebbe all wi' the Lord my childer, I han't gotten  
none !

Sa new Squire's coom'd wi' 'is taäil in 'is 'and, an' owd  
Squire's gone.

III.

Fur 'staäte be i' taäil, my lass : tha dosn' knaw what  
that be ?

But I knaws the law, I does, for the lawyer ha towd  
it me.

'When theer's naw 'eäd to a 'Ouse by the fault o' that  
ere maäle—

The gells they counts fur nowt, and the next un he  
taäkes the taäil.'

IV.

What be the next un like ? can tha tell ony harm on  
'im lass ?—

<sup>1</sup> A brood of chickens.

Naay sit down—naw 'urry—sa cowl !—hev another  
glass !

Straänge an' cowl fur the time ! we may happen a  
fall o' snaw—

Not es I cares fur to hear ony harm, but I likes to  
knaw.

An' I 'oäps es 'e beänt boooklarn'd : but 'e dosn' not  
coom fro' the shere ;

We'd anew o' that wi' the Squire, an' we haätes  
boooklarnin' ere.

V.

Fur Squire wur a Varsity scholard, an' niver lookt  
arter the land—

Whoäts or tonups or taätes—'e 'ed hallus a booök i'  
'is 'and,

Hallus aloän wi' 'is booöks, thaw nigh upo' seventy  
year.

An' booöks, what's booöks ? thou knaws thebbe  
naither 'ere nor theer.

VI.

An' the gells, they hedn't naw taäils, an' the lawyer  
he tow'd it me

'That 'is taäil were soä tied up es he couldn't cut down  
a tree !

‘Drat the trees,’ says I, to be sewer I haätes ’em, my  
lass,  
Fur we puts the muck o’ the land an’ they sucks the  
muck fro’ the grass.

VII.

An’ Squire wur hallus a-smilin’, an’ gied to the tramps  
goin’ by—  
An’ all o’ the wust i’ the parish—wi’ hoffens a drop in  
’is eye.  
An’ ivry darter o’ Squire’s hed her awn ridin-erse to  
’ersen,  
An’ they rampaged about wi’ their grooms, an’ was  
’untin’ arter the men,  
An’ hallus a-dallackt <sup>1</sup> an’ dizen’d out, an’ a-buyin’ new  
cloäthes,  
While ’e sit like a graät glimmer-gowk <sup>2</sup> wi’ ’is glasses  
athurt ’is noäse,  
An’ ’is noäse sa grufted wi’ snuff es it couldn’t be  
scroob’d awaäy,  
Fur atween ’is reädin’ an’ writin’ ’e snift up a box in  
a daäy,  
An’ ’e niver runn’d arter the fox, nor arter the birds  
wi’ ’is gun,  
An’ ’e niver not shot one ’are, but ’e leäved it to  
Charlie ’is son,

<sup>1</sup> Overdrest in gay colours.

<sup>2</sup> Owl.

An' 'e niver not fish'd 'is awn ponds, but Charlie 'e  
     cotch'd the pike,  
 For 'e warn't not burn to the land, an' 'e didn't take  
     kind to it like ;  
 But I eärs es 'e'd gie fur a howry<sup>1</sup> owd book thutty  
     pound an' moor,  
 An' 'e'd wrote an owd book, his awn sen, sa I knaw'd  
     es 'e'd coom to be poor ;  
 An' 'e gied—I be fear'd fur to tell tha 'ow much—fur  
     an owd scratted stoän,  
 An' 'e digg'd up a loomp i' the land an' 'e got a brown  
     pot an' a boän,  
 An' 'e bowt owd money, es wouldn't goä, wi' good  
     gowd o' the Queen,  
 An' 'e bowt little statutes all-naäkt an' which was a  
     shaame to be seen ;  
 But 'e niver looökt ower a bill, nor 'e niver not seed  
     to owt,  
 An' 'e niver knawd nowt but booöks, an' booöks, as  
     thou knaws, beänt nowt.

## VIII.

But owd Squire's laädy es long es she lived she kep  
     'em all clear,  
 Thaw es long es she lived I niver hed none of 'er  
     darters 'ere ;

<sup>1</sup> Filthy.

But arter she died we was all es one, the childer an'  
me,

An' sarvints runn'd in an' out, an' offens we hed 'em  
to tea.

Lawk ! 'ow I laugh'd when the lasses 'ud talk o' their  
Missis's waäys,

An' the Missisis talk'd o' the lasses.—I'll tell tha some  
o' these daäys.

Hoäinly Miss Annie were saw stuck oop, like 'er  
mother afoor—

'Er an' 'er blessed darter—they niver derken'd my  
door.

IX.

An' Squire 'e smiled an' 'e smiled till 'e'd gotten a  
fright at last,

An' 'e calls fur 'is son, fur the 'turney's letters they  
foller'd sa fast ;

But Squire wur afear'd o' 'is son, an' 'e says to 'im,  
meek as a mouse,

'Lad, thou mun cut off thy taäil, or the gells 'ull goä  
to the 'Ouse,

Fur I finds es I be that i' debt, es I 'oäps es thou'll  
'elp me a bit,

An' if thou'll 'gree to cut off thy taäil I may saäve  
mysen yit.'

## X.

But Charlie 'e sets back 'is ears, an' 'e sweärs, an' 'e  
says to 'im 'Noa.

I've gotten the 'staäte by the taail an' be dang'd if I  
iver let goa !

Coom ! coom ! feyther, 'e says, 'why shouldn't thy  
booöks be sowd ?

I hears es soom o' thy booöks mebbe worth their  
weight i' gowd.'

## XI.

Heäps an' heäps o' booöks, I ha' see'd 'em, belong'd to  
the Squire,

But the lasses 'ed teärd out leäves i' the middle to  
kindle the fire ;

Sa moäst on 'is owd big booöks fetch'd nigh to nowt  
at the saäle,

And Squire were at Charlie ageän to git 'im to cut off  
'is taail.

## XII.

Ya wouldn't find Charlie's likes—'e were that out-  
dacious at 'oäm,

Not thaw ya went fur to raäke out Hell wi' a small-  
tooth coämb—



Droonk wi' the Quoloty's wine, an' droonk wi' the  
farmer's aäle,  
Mad wi' the lasses an' all—an' 'e wouldn't cut off the  
taäil.

XIII.

Thou's coom'd oop by the beck ; and a thurn be a-  
grawin' theer,  
I niver ha seed it sa white wi' the Maäy es I see'd it  
to-year—  
Theerabouts Charlie joompt—and it gied me a scare  
tother night,  
Fur I thowt it wur Charlie's ghoäst i' the derk, fur it  
looökt sa white.  
'Billy,' says 'e, 'hev a joomp !—thaw the banks o'  
the beck be sa high,  
Fur he ca'd 'is 'erse Billy-rough-un, thaw niver a hair  
wur awry ;  
But Billy fell bakkuds o' Charlie, an' Charlie 'e brok  
'is neck,  
Sa theer wur a hend o' the taäil, fur 'e lost 'is taäil i'  
the beck.

XIV.

Sa 'is taäil wur lost an' 'is booöks wur gone an' 'is boy  
wur deäd,  
An' Squire 'e smiled an' 'e smiled, but 'e niver not  
lift oop 'is 'eäd :

Hallus a soft un Squire ! an' 'e smiled, fur 'e hedn't  
 naw friend,  
 Sa feyther an' son was buried togither, an' this wur  
 the hend.

## XV.

An' Parson as hesn't the call, nor the mooney, but  
 hes the pride,  
 'E reäds of a sewer an' sartan 'oäp o' the tother side ;  
 But I beänt that sewer es the Lord, howsiver they  
 praäy'd an' praäy'd,  
 Lets them inter 'eaven eäsy es leäves their debts to be  
 pääd.  
 Siver the mou'ds rattled down upo' poor owd Squire  
 i' the wood,  
 An' I cried along wi' the gells, fur they weänt niver  
 coom to naw good.

## XVI.

Fur Molly the long un she walkt awaäy wi' a hofficer lad,  
 An' nawbody 'eärd on 'er sin, sa o' coorse she be gone  
 to the bad !  
 An' Lucy wur laäme o' one leg, sweet'arts she niver  
 'ed none—  
 Straänge an' unheppen<sup>1</sup> Miss Lucy ! we naämed her  
 'Dot an' gaw one !'

<sup>1</sup> Ungainly, awkward.

An' Hetty wur weak i' the hatties, wi'out ony harm i'  
the legs,

An' the fever 'ed baäked Jinny's 'eäd as bald as one  
o' them heggs,

An' Nelly wur up fro' the craädle as big i' the mouth  
as a cow,

An' saw she mun hammergrate,<sup>1</sup> lass, or she weänt git  
a maäte onyhow !

An' es for Miss Annie es call'd me afoor my awn  
foälks to my faäce

'A hignorant village wife as 'ud hev to be larn'd her  
awn plaäce,'

Hes fur Miss Hannie the heldest hes now be a-grawin'  
sa howd,

I knaws that mooch o' sheä, es it beänt not fit to be  
towd !

XVII.

Sa I didn't not taäke it kindly ov owd Miss Annie to  
saäy

Es I should be talkin ageän 'em, es soon es they went  
awaäy,

Fur, lawks ! 'ow I cried when they went, an' our Nelly  
she gied me 'er 'and,

Fur I'd ha done owt for the Squire an' 'is gells es  
belong'd to the land ;

<sup>1</sup> Emigrate.

Booöks, es I said afoor, thebbe neyther 'ere nor theer!  
But I sarved 'em wi' butter an' heggs fur huppuds o'  
twenty year.

## XVIII.

An' they hallus paäid what I hax'd, sa I hallus deal'd  
wi' the Hall,  
An' they knaw'd what butter wur, an' they knaw'd  
what a hegg wur an' all ;  
Hugger-mugger they lived, but they wasn't that eäsy  
to pleäse,  
Till I gied 'em Hinjian curn, an' they laäid big heggs  
es tha seesas ;  
An' I niver puts saäme<sup>1</sup> i' *my* butter, they does it at  
Willis's farm,  
Taäste another drop o' the wine—tweänt do tha naw  
harm.

## XIX.

Sa new Squire's coom'd wi' 'is taäil in 'is 'and, an' owd  
Squire's gone ;  
I heard 'im a roomlin' by, but arter my nightcap wur on ;  
Sa I han't clapt eyes on 'im yit, fur he coom'd last  
night sa laäte—  
Pluksh ! ! !<sup>2</sup> the hens i' the pcäs ! why didn't tha  
hesp the gaäte ?

<sup>1</sup> Lard.<sup>2</sup> A cry accompanied by a clapping of hands to scare trespassing fowl.

## IN THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL.

EMMIE.

### I.

OUR doctor had call'd in another, I never had seen  
him before,

But he sent a chill to my heart when I saw him come  
in at the door,

Fresh from the surgery-schools of France and of other  
lands—

Harsh red hair, big voice, big chest, big merciless  
hands!

Wonderful cures he had done, O yes, but they said  
too of him

He was happier using the knife than in trying to save  
the limb,

And that I can well believe, for he look'd so coarse  
and so red,

I could think he was one of those who would break  
their jests on the dead,

And mangle the living dog that had loved him and  
fawn'd at his knee—  
Drench'd with the hellish oorali—that ever such  
things should be !

## II

Here was a boy—I am sure that some of our children  
would die  
But for the voice of Love, and the smile, and the  
comforting eye—  
Here was a boy in the ward, every bone seem'd out  
of its place—  
Caught in a mill and crush'd—it was all but a hopeless  
case :  
And he handled him gently enough ; but his voice  
and his face were not kind,  
And it was but a hopeless case, he had seen it and  
made up his mind,  
And he said to me roughly 'The lad will need little  
more of your care.'  
'All the more need,' I told him, 'to seek the Lord  
Jesus in prayer ;  
They are all his children here, and I pray for them  
all as my own :'  
But he turn'd to me, 'Ay, good woman, can prayer  
set a broken bone ?'

Then he mutter'd half to himself, but I know that I  
heard him say  
'All very well—but the good Lord Jesus has had his  
day.'

## III.

Had? has it come? It has only dawn'd. It will  
come by and by.  
O how could I serve in the wards if the hope of the  
world were a lie?  
How could I bear with the sights and the loathsome  
smells of disease  
But that He said 'Ye do it to me, when ye do it to  
these'?

## IV.

So he went. And we past to this ward where the  
younger children are laid :  
Here is the cot of our orphan, our darling, our meek  
little maid ;  
Empty you see just now ! We have lost her who  
loved her so much—  
Patient of pain tho' as quick as a sensitive plant to  
the touch ;  
Hers was the prettiest prattle, it often moved me to tears,  
Hers was the gratefulest heart I have found in a child  
of her years—

Nay you remember our Emmie ; you used to send  
her the flowers ;  
How she would smile at 'em, play with 'em, talk to  
'em hours after hours !  
They that can wander at will where the works of the  
Lord are reveal'd  
Little guess what joy can be got from a cowslip out of  
the field ;  
Flowers to these 'spirits in prison' are all they can  
know of the spring,  
They freshen and sweeten the wards like the waft of  
an Angel's wing ;  
And she lay with a flower in one hand and her thin  
hands crost on her breast—  
Wan, but as pretty as heart can desire, and we thought  
her at rest,  
Quietly sleeping—so quiet, our doctor said 'Poor little  
dear,  
Nurse, I must do it to-morrow ; she'll never live thro'  
it, I fear.'

## v.

I walk'd with our kindly old doctor as far as the head  
of the stair,  
Then I return'd to the ward ; the child didn't see I  
was there.



## VI.

Never since I was nurse, had I been so grieved and so vexed !

Emmie had heard him. Softly she call'd from her cot to the next,

'He says I shall never live thro' it, O Annie, what shall I do?'

Annie consider'd. 'If I,' said the wise little Annie, 'was you,

I should cry to the dear Lord Jesus to help me, for, Emmie, you see,

It's all in the picture there: "Little children should come to me."'

(Meaning the print that you gave us, I find that it always can please

Our children, the dear Lord Jesus with children about his knees.)

'Yes, and I will,' said Emmie, 'but then if I call to the Lord,

How should he know that it's me? such a lot of beds in the ward!'

That was a puzzle for Annie. Again she consider'd and said :

'Emmie, you put out your arms, and you leave 'em outside on the bed—

The Lord has so *much* to see to! but, Emmie, you  
tell it him plain,  
It's the little girl with her arms lying out on the  
counterpane.'

## VII.

I had sat three nights by the child—I could not watch  
her for four—  
My brain had begun to reel—I felt I could do it no  
more.  
That was my sleeping-night, but I thought that it  
never would pass.  
There was a thunderclap once, and a clatter of hail on  
the glass,  
And there was a phantom cry that I heard as I tost  
about,  
The motherless bleat of a lamb in the storm and the  
darkness without ;  
My sleep was broken besides with dreams of the  
dreadful knife  
And fears for our delicate Emmie who scarce would  
escape with her life ;  
Then in the gray of the morning it seem'd she stood  
by me and smiled,  
And the doctor came at his hour, and we went to see  
to the child.

VIII.

He had brought his ghastly tools: we believed her  
asleep again—

Her dear, long, lean, little arms lying out on the  
counterpane;

Say that His day is done! Ah why should we care  
what they say?

The Lord of the children had heard her, and Emmie  
had past away.

DEDICATORY POEM TO THE PRINCESS  
ALICE.

DEAD PRINCESS, living Power, if that, which lived  
True life, live on—and if the fatal kiss,  
Born of true life and love, divorce thee not  
From earthly love and life—if what we call  
The spirit flash not all at once from out  
This shadow into Substance—then perhaps  
The mellow'd murmur of the people's praise  
From thine own State, and all our breadth of  
realm,

Where Love and Longing dress thy deeds in light,  
Ascends to thee ; and this March morn that sees  
Thy Soldier-brother's bridal orange-bloom  
Break thro' the yews and cypress of thy grave,  
And thine Imperial mother smile again,  
May send one ray to thee ! and who can tell—  
Thou—England's England-loving daughter—thou  
Dying so English thou wouldst have her flag  
Borne on thy coffin—where is he can swear

But that some broken gleam from our poor earth  
May touch thee, while remembering thee, I lay  
At thy pale feet this ballad of the deeds  
Of England, and her banner in the East ?

## THE DEFENCE OF LUCKNOW.

### I.

BANNER of England, not for a season, O banner of  
Britain, hast thou  
Floated in conquering battle or flapt to the battle-  
cry !  
Never with mightier glory than when we had rear'd  
thee on high  
Flying at top of the roofs in the ghastly siege of  
Lucknow—  
Shot thro' the staff or the halyard, but ever we raised  
thee anew,  
And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of England  
blew.

### II.

Frail were the works that defended the hold that we  
held with our lives—  
Women and children among us, God help them, our  
children and wives !

Hold it we might—and for fifteen days or for twenty  
at most.

‘Never surrender, I charge you, but every man die at  
his post!’

Voice of the dead whom we loved, our Lawrence the  
best of the brave :

Cold were his brows when we kiss’d him—we laid him  
that night in his grave.

‘Every man die at his post!’ and there hail’d on our  
houses and halls

Death from their rifle-bullets, and death from their  
cannon-balls,

Death in our innermost chamber, and death at our  
slight barricade,

Death while we stood with the musket, and death  
while we stoopt to the spade,

Death to the dying, and wounds to the wounded, for  
often there fell,

Striking the hospital wall, crashing thro’ it, their shot  
and their shell,

Death—for their spies were among us, their marksmen  
were told of our best,

So that the brute bullet broke thro’ the brain that  
could think for the rest ;

Bullets would sing by our foreheads, and bullets would  
rain at our feet—

Fire from ten thousand at once of the rebels that  
girdled us round—  
Death at the glimpse of a finger from over the breadth  
of a street,  
Death from the heights of the mosque and the palace,  
and death in the ground !  
Mine ? yes, a mine ! Countermine ! down, down ! and  
creep thro' the hole !  
Keep the revolver in hand ! you can hear him—the  
murderous mole !  
Quiet, ah ! quiet—wait till the point of the pickaxe be  
thro' !  
Click with the pick, coming nearer and nearer again  
than before—  
Now let it speak, and you fire, and the dark pioneer  
is no more ;  
And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of England  
blew !

## III.

Ay, but the foe sprung his mine many times, and it  
chanced on a day  
Soon as the blast of that underground thunderclap  
echo'd away,  
Dark thro' the smoke and the sulphur like so many  
fiends in their hell—  
Cannon-shot, musket-shot, volley on volley, and yell  
upon yell—



Fiercely on all the defences our myriad enemy fell.  
What have they done? where is it? Out yonder.  
Guard the Redan!  
Storm at the Water-gate! storm at the Bailey-gate!  
storm, and it ran  
Surging and swaying all round us, as ocean on every  
side  
Plunges and heaves at a bank that is daily devour'd  
by the tide—  
So many thousands that if they be bold enough, who  
shall escape?  
Kill or be kill'd, live or die, they shall know we are  
soldiers and men!  
Ready! take aim at their leaders—their masses are  
gapp'd with our grape—  
Backward they reel like the wave, like the wave fling-  
ing forward again,  
Flying and foil'd at the last by the handful they could  
not subdue;  
And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of Eng-  
land blew.

## IV.

Handful of men as we were, we were English in heart  
and in limb,  
Strong with the strength of the race to command, to  
obey, to endure,

Each of us fought as if hope for the garrison hung  
but on him ;

Still—could we watch at all points? we were every  
day fewer and fewer.

There was a whisper among us, but only a whisper  
that past :

‘Children and wives—if the tigers leap into the fold  
unawares—

Every man die at his post—and the foe may outlive  
us at last—

Better to fall by the hands that they love, than to fall  
into theirs !’

Roar upon roar in a moment two mines by the enemy  
sprung

Clove into perilous chasms our walls and our poor  
palisades.

Rifleman, true is your heart, but be sure that your  
hand be as true !

Sharp is the fire of assault, better aimed are your flank  
fusillades—

Twice do we hurl them to earth from the ladders to  
which they had clung,

Twice from the ditch where they shelter we drive  
them with hand-grenades ;

And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of  
England blew.

## V.

Then on another wild morning another wild earth-  
quake out-tore

Clean from our lines of defence ten or twelve good  
paces or more.

Rifleman, high on the roof, hidden there from the  
light of the sun—

One has leapt up on the breach, crying out : ‘ Follow  
me, follow me !’—

Mark him—he falls ! then another, and *him* too, and  
down goes he.

Had they been bold enough then, who can tell but  
the traitors had won ?

Boardings and rafters and doors—an embrasure !  
make way for the gun !

Now double-charge it with grape ! It is charged and  
we fire, and they run.

Praise to our Indian brothers, and let the dark face  
have his due !

Thanks to the kindly dark faces who fought with us,  
faithful and few,

Fought with the bravest among us, and drove them,  
and smote them, and slew,

That ever upon the topmost roof our banner in India  
blew.

## VI,

Men will forget what we suffer and not what we do.

We can fight !

But to be soldier all day and be sentinel all thro' the  
night—

Ever the mine and assault, our sallies, their lying  
alarms,

Bugles and drums in the darkness, and shoutings and  
soundings to arms,

Ever the labour of fifty that had to be done by five,

Ever the marvel among us that one should be left  
alive,

Ever the day with its traitorous death from the loop-  
holes around,

Ever the night with its coffinless corpse to be laid in  
the ground,

Heat like the mouth of a hell, or a deluge of cataract  
skies,

Stench of old offal decaying, and infinite torment of  
flies,

Thoughts of the breezes of May blowing over an  
English field,

Cholera, scurvy, and fever, the wound that *would* not  
be heal'd,

Lopping away of the limb by the pitiful-pitiless knife,—

Torture and trouble in vain,—for it never could save  
us a life.

Valour of delicate women who tended the hospital  
bed,

Horror of women in travail among the dying and dead,  
Grief for our perishing children, and never a moment  
for grief,

Toil and ineffable weariness, faltering hopes of relief,  
Havelock baffled, or beaten, or butcher'd for all that  
we knew—

Then day and night, day and night, coming down on  
the still-shatter'd walls

Millions of musket-bullets, and thousands of cannon-  
balls—

But ever upon the topmost roof our banner of England  
blew.

## VII.

Hark cannonade, fusillade ! is it true what was told  
by the scout,

Outram and Havelock breaking their way through the  
fell mutineers ?

Surely the pibroch of Europe is ringing again in our  
ears !

All on a sudden the garrison utter a jubilant shout,  
Havelock's glorious Highlanders answer with con-  
quering cheers,

Sick from the hospital echo them, women and children  
come out,

Blessing the wholesome white faces of Havelock's  
good fusileers,

Kissing the war-harden'd hand of the Highlander wet  
with their tears !

Dance to the pibroch !—saved ! we are saved !—is it  
you ? is it you ?

Saved by the valour of Havelock, saved by the blessing  
of Heaven !

‘ Hold it for fifteen days ! ’ we have held it for eighty-  
seven !

And ever aloft on the palace roof the old banner of  
England blew.

SIR JOHN OLDCASTLE, LORD COBHAM.

(IN WALES.)

My friend should meet me somewhere hereabout  
To take me to that hiding in the hills.

I have broke their cage, no gilded one, I trow—  
I read no more the prisoner's mute wail  
Scribbled or carved upon the pitiless stone ;  
I find hard rocks, hard life, hard cheer, or none,  
For I am emptier than a friar's brains ;  
But God is with me in this wilderness,  
These wet black passes and foam-churning chasms—  
And God's free air, and hope of better things.

I would I knew their speech ; not now to glean,  
Not now—I hope to do it—some scatter'd ears,  
Some ears for Christ in this wild field of Wales—  
But, bread, merely for bread. This tongue that wagg'd  
They said with such heretical arrogance  
Against the proud archbishop Arundel—

So much God's cause was fluent in it—is here  
 But as a Latin Bible to the crowd ;  
 'Bara !'—what use ? The Shepherd, when I speak,  
 Vailing a sudden eyelid with his hand  
 'Dim Saesneg' passes, wroth at things of old—  
 No fault of mine. Had he God's word in Welsh  
 He might be kindlier : happily come the day !

Not least art thou, thou little Bethlehem  
 In Judah, for in thee the Lord was born ;  
 Nor thou in Britain, little Lutterworth,  
 Least, for in thee the word was born again.

Heaven-sweet Evangel, ever-living word,  
 Who whilome spakest to the South in Greek  
 About the soft Mediterranean shores,  
 And then in Latin to the Latin crowd,  
 As good need was—thou hast come to talk our isle.  
 Hereafter thou, fulfilling Pentecost,  
 Must learn to use the tongues of all the world.  
 Yet art thou thine own witness that thou bringest  
 Not peace, a sword, a fire.

What did he say,  
 My frightened Wiclif-preacher whom I crost  
 In flying hither ? that one night a crowd  
 Throng'd the waste field about the city gates :  
 The king was on them suddenly with a host.



Why there? they came to hear their preacher. Then  
Some cried on Cobham, on the good Lord Cobham;  
Ay, for they love me! but the king—nor voice  
Nor finger raised against him—took and hang'd,  
Took, hang'd and burnt—how many—thirty-nine—  
Call'd it rebellion—hang'd, poor friends, as rebels  
And burn'd alive as heretics! for your Priest  
Labels—to take the king along with him—  
All heresy, treason: but to call men traitors  
May make men traitors.

Rose of Lancaster,  
Red in thy birth, redder with household war,  
Now reddest with the blood of holy men,  
Redder to be, red rose of Lancaster—  
If somewhere in the North, as Rumour sang  
Fluttering the hawks of this crown-lusting line—  
By firth and loch thy silver sister grow,<sup>1</sup>  
That were my rose, there my allegiance due.  
Self-starved, they say—nay, murder'd, doubtless dead.  
So to this king I cleaved: my friend was he,  
Once my fast friend: I would have given my life  
To help his own from scathe, a thousand lives  
To save his soul. He might have come to learn  
Our Wiclif's learning: but the worldly Priests  
Who fear the king's hard common-sense should find  
What rotten piles uphold their mason-work,

<sup>1</sup> Richard II.

Urge him to foreign war. O had he will'd  
 I might have stricken a lusty stroke for him,  
 But he would not ; far liever led my friend  
 Back to the pure and universal church,  
 But he would not : whether that heirless flaw  
 In his throne's title make him feel so frail,  
 He leans on Antichrist ; or that his mind,  
 So quick, so capable in soldiership,  
 In matters of the faith, alas the while !  
 More worth than all the kingdoms of this world,  
 Runs in the rut, a coward to the Priest.

Burnt—good Sir Roger Acton, my dear friend !  
 Burnt too, my faithful preacher, Beverley !  
 Lord give thou power to thy two witnesses !  
 Lest the false faith make merry over them !  
 Two—nay but thirty-nine have risen and stand,  
 Dark with the smoke of human sacrifice,  
 Before thy light, and cry continually—  
 Cry—against whom ?

Him, who should bear the sword  
 Of Justice—what ! the kingly, kindly boy ;  
 Who took the world so easily heretofore,  
 My boon companion, tavern-fellow—him  
 Who gibed and japed—in many a merry tale  
 That shook our sides—at Pardoners, Summoners,  
 Friars, absolution-sellers, monkeries

And nunneries, when the wild hour and the wine  
Had set the wits aflame.

Harry of Monmouth,  
Or Amurath of the East?

Better to sink  
Thy fleurs-de-lys in slime again, and fling  
Thy royalty back into the riotous fits  
Of wine and harlotry—thy shame, and mine,  
Thy comrade—than to persecute the Lord,  
And play the Saul that never will be Paul.

Burnt, burnt! and while this mitred Arundel  
Dooms our unlicensed preacher to the flame,  
The mitre-sanction'd harlot draws his clerks  
Into the suburb—their hard celibacy,  
Sworn to be veriest ice of pureness, molten  
Into adulterous living, or such crimes  
As holy Paul—a shame to speak of them—  
Among the heathen—

Sanctuary granted  
To bandit, thief, assassin—yea to him  
Who hacks his mother's throat—denied to him,  
Who finds the Saviour in his mother tongue.  
The Gospel, the Priest's pearl, flung down to swine—  
The swine, lay-men, lay-women, who will come,  
God willing, to outlearn the filthy friar.  
Ah rather, Lord, than that thy Gospel, meant

To course and range thro' all the world, should be  
 Tether'd to these dead pillars of the Church—  
 Rather than so, if thou wilt have it so,  
 Burst vein, snap sinew, and crack heart, and life  
 Pass in the fire of Babylon ! but how long,  
 O Lord, how long !

My friend should meet me here.

Here is the copse, the fountain and—a Cross !  
 To thee, dead wood, I bow not head nor knees.  
 Rather to thee, green boscage, work of God,  
 Black holly, and white-flower'd wayfaring-tree !  
 Rather to thee, thou living water, drawn  
 By this good Wiclif mountain down from heaven,  
 And speaking clearly in thy native tongue—  
 No Latin—He that thirsteth, come and drink !

Eh ! how I anger'd Arundel asking me  
 To worship Holy Cross ! I spread mine arms,  
 God's work, I said, a cross of flesh and blood  
 And holier. That was heresy. (My good friend  
 By this time should be with me.) 'Images?'  
 'Bury them as God's truer images  
 Are daily buried.' 'Heresy.—Penance?' 'Fast,  
 Hairshirt and scourge—nay, let a man repent,  
 Do penance in his heart, God hears him.' 'Heresy—  
 Not shriven, not saved?' 'What profits an ill Priest  
 Between me and my God? I would not spurn

Good counsel of good friends, but shrive myself

No, not to an Apostle.' 'Heresy.'

(My friend is long in coming.) 'Pilgrimages?'

'Drink, bagpipes, revelling, devil's-dances, vice.

The poor man's money gone to fat the friar.

Who reads of begging saints in Scripture?'—

'Heresy'—

(Hath he been here—not found me—gone again?

Have I mislearnt our place of meeting?) 'Bread—

Bread left after the blessing?' how they stared,

That was their main test-question—glared at me!

'He veil'd Himself in flesh, and now He veils

His flesh in bread, body and bread together.'

Then rose the howl of all the cassock'd wolves,

'No bread, no bread. God's body!' Archbishop,

Bishop,

Priors, Canons, Friars, bellringers, Parish-clerks—

'No bread, no bread!'—'Authority of the Church,

Power of the keys!'—Then I, God help me, I

So mock'd, so spurn'd, so baited two whole days—

I lost myself and fell from evenness,

And rail'd at all the Popes, that ever since

Sylvester shed the venom of world-wealth

Into the church, had only prov'n themselves

Poisoners, murderers. Well—God pardon all—

Me, them, and all the world—yea, that proud Priest,

That mock-meek mouth of utter Antichrist,

That traitor to King Richard and the truth,  
Who rose and doom'd me to the fire.

Amen !

Nay, I can burn, so that the Lord of life  
Be by me in my death.

Those three ! the fourth  
Was like the Son of God ! Not burnt were they.  
On *them* the smell of burning had not past.  
That was a miracle to convert the king.  
These Pharisees, this Caiaphas-Arundel  
What miracle could turn ? *He* here again,  
*He* thwarting their traditions of Himself,  
*He* would be found a heretic to Himself,  
And doom'd to burn alive.

So, caught, I burn.

Burn ? heathen men have borne as much as this,  
For freedom, or the sake of those they loved,  
Or some less cause, some cause far less than mine ;  
For every other cause is less than mine.  
The moth will singe her wings, and singed return,  
Her love of light quenching her fear of pain—  
How now, my soul, we do not heed the fire ?  
Faint-hearted ? tut !—faint-stomach'd ! faint as I am,  
God willing, I will burn for Him.

Who comes ?

A thousand marks are set upon my head.  
Friend ?—foe perhaps—a tussle for it then !

Nay, but my friend. Thou art so well disguised,  
I knew thee not. Hast thou brought bread with thee?  
I have not broken bread for fifty hours.  
None? I am damn'd already by the Priest  
For holding there was bread where bread was none—  
No bread. My friends await me yonder? Yes.  
Lead on then. *Up* the mountain? Is it far?  
Not far. Climb first and reach me down thy hand.  
I am not like to die for lack of bread,  
For I must live to testify by fire.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> He was burnt on Christmas Day, 1417.

## COLUMBUS.

CHAINS, my good lord : in your raised brows I read  
Some wonder at our chamber ornaments.  
We brought this iron from our isles of gold.

Does the king know you deign to visit him  
Whom once he rose from off his throne to greet  
Before his people, like his brother king ?  
I saw your face that morning in the crowd.

At Barcelona—tho' you were not then  
So bearded. Yes. The city deck'd herself  
To meet me, roar'd my name ; the king, the queen  
Bad me be seated, speak, and tell them all  
The story of my voyage, and while I spoke  
The crowd's roar fell as at the ' Peace, be still !'  
And when I ceased to speak, the king, the queen,  
Sank from their thrones, and melted into tears,  
And knelt, and lifted hand and heart and voice  
In praise to God who led me thro' the waste.  
And then the great ' Laudamus ' rose to heaven.



Chains for the Admiral of the Ocean ! chains  
For him who gave a new heaven, a new earth,  
As holy John had prophesied of me,  
Gave glory and more empire to the kings  
Of Spain than all their battles ! chains for him  
Who push'd his prows into the setting sun,  
And made West East, and sail'd the Dragon's mouth,  
And came upon the Mountain of the World,  
And saw the rivers roll from Paradise !

Chains ! we are Admirals of the Ocean, we,  
We and our sons for ever. Ferdinand  
Hath sign'd it and our Holy Catholic queen—  
Of the Ocean—of the Indies—Admirals we—  
Our title, which we never mean to yield,  
Our guerdon not alone for what we did,  
But our amends for all we might have done—  
The vast occasion of our stronger life—  
Eighteen long years of waste, seven in your Spain,  
Lost, showing courts and kings a truth the babe  
Will suck in with his milk hereafter—earth  
A sphere.

Were *you* at Salamanca ? No.  
We fronted there the learning of all Spain,  
All their cosmogonies, their astronomies :  
Guess-work *they* guess'd it, but the golden guess

Is morning-star to the full round of truth.  
No guess-work ! I was certain of my goal ;  
Some thought it heresy, but that would not hold.  
King David call'd the heavens a hide, a tent  
Spread over earth, and so this earth was flat :  
Some cited old Lactantius : could it be  
That trees grew downward, rain fell upward, men  
Walk'd like the fly on ceilings ? and besides,  
The great Augustine wrote that none could breathe  
Within the zone of heat ; so might there be  
Two Adams, two mankinds, and that was clean  
Against God's word : thus was I beaten back,  
And chiefly to my sorrow by the Church,  
And thought to turn my face from Spain, appeal  
Once more to France or England ; but our Queen  
Recall'd me, for at last their Highnesses  
Were half-assured this earth might be a sphere.

All glory to the all-blessed Trinity,  
All glory to the mother of our Lord,  
And Holy Church, from whom I never swerved  
Not even by one hair's-breadth of heresy,  
I have accomplish'd what I came to do.

Not yet—not all—last night a dream—I sail'd  
On my first voyage, harass'd by the frights  
Of my first crew, their curses and their groans.

The great flame-banner borne by Teneriffe,  
The compass, like an old friend false at last  
In our most need, appall'd them, and the wind  
Still westward, and the weedy seas—at length  
The landbird, and the branch with berries on it,  
The carven staff—and last the light, the light  
On Guanahani ! but I changed the name ;  
San Salvador I call'd it ; and the light  
Grew as I gazed, and brought out a broad sky  
Of dawning over—not those alien palms,  
The marvel of that fair new nature—not  
That Indian isle, but our most ancient East  
Moriah with Jerusalem ; and I saw  
The glory of the Lord flash up, and beat  
Thro' all the homely town from jasper, sapphire,  
Chalcedony, emerald, sardonyx, sardius,  
Chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chrysoprase,  
Jacynth, and amethyst—and those twelve gates,  
Pearl—and I woke, and thought—death—I shall die—  
I am written in the Lamb's own Book of Life  
To walk within the glory of the Lord  
Sunless and moonless, utter light —but no !  
The Lord had sent this bright, strange dream to me  
To mind me of the secret vow I made  
When Spain was waging war against the Moor—  
I strove myself with Spain against the Moor.  
There came two voices from the Sepulchre,

Two friars crying that if Spain should oust  
The Moslem from her limit, he, the fierce  
Soldan of Egypt, would break down and raze  
The blessed tomb of Christ ; whereon I vow'd  
That, if our Princes harken'd to my prayer,  
Whatever wealth I brought from that new world  
Should, in this old, be consecrate to lead  
A new crusade against the Saracen,  
And free the Holy Sepulchre from thrall.

Gold? I had brought your Princes gold enough  
If left alone ! Being but a Genovese,  
I am handled worse than had I been a Moor,  
And breach'd the belting wall of Cambalu,  
And given the Great Khan's palaces to the Moor,  
Or clutch'd the sacred crown of Prester John,  
And cast it to the Moor : but *had* I brought  
From Solomon's now-recover'd Ophir all  
The gold that Solomon's navies carried home,  
Would that have gilded *me* ? Blue blood of Spain,  
'Tho' quartering your own royal arms of Spain,  
I have not : blue blood and black blood of Spain,  
The noble and the convict of Castile,  
How'd me from Hispaniola ; for you know  
The flies at home, that ever swarm about  
And cloud the highest heads, and murmur down  
Truth in the distance—these outbuzz'd me so

That even our prudent king, our righteous queen—  
I pray'd them being so calumniated  
They would commission one of weight and worth  
To judge between my slander'd self and me—  
Fonseca my main enemy at their court,  
They sent me out *his* tool, Bovadilla, one  
As ignorant and impolitic as a beast—  
Blockish irreverence, brainless greed—who sack'd  
My dwelling, seized upon my papers, loosed  
My captives, feed the rebels of the crown,  
Sold the crown-farms for all but nothing, gave  
All but free leave for all to work the mines,  
Drove me and my good brothers home in chains,  
And gathering ruthless gold—a single piece  
Weigh'd nigh four thousand Castellanos—so  
They tell me—weigh'd him down into the abysm—  
The hurricane of the latitude on him fell,  
The seas of our discovering over-roll  
Him and his gold ; the frailer caravel,  
With what was mine, came happily to the shore.  
*There* was a glimmering of God's hand.

And God

Hath more than glimmer'd on me. O my lord,  
I swear to you I heard his voice between  
The thunders in the black Veragua nights,  
'O soul of little faith, slow to believe !

Have I not been about thee from thy birth?  
Given thee the keys of the great Ocean-sea?  
Set thee in light till time shall be no more?  
Is it I who have deceived thee or the world?  
Endure! thou hast done so well for men, that men  
Cry out against thee: was it otherwise  
With mine own Son?’

And more than once in days  
Of doubt and cloud and storm, when drowning hope  
Sank all but out of sight, I heard his voice,  
‘Be not cast down. I lead thee by the hand,  
Fear not.’ And I shall hear his voice again—  
I know that he has led me all my life,  
I am not yet too old to work his will—  
His voice again.

Still for all that, my lord,  
I lying here bedridden and alone,  
Cast off, put by, scouted by court and king—  
The first discoverer starves—his followers, all  
Flower into fortune—our world’s way—and I,  
Without a roof that I can call mine own,  
With scarce a coin to buy a meal withal,  
And seeing what a door for scoundrel scum  
I open’d to the West, thro’ which the lust  
Villany, violence, avarice, of your Spain

Pour'd in on all those happy naked isles—  
Their kindly native princes slain or slaved,  
Their wives and children Spanish concubines,  
Their innocent hospitalities quench'd in blood,  
Some dead of hunger, some beneath the scourge,  
Some over-labour'd, some by their own hands,—  
Yea, the dear mothers, crazing Nature, kill  
Their babies at the breast for hate of Spain—  
Ah God, the harmless people whom we found  
In Hispaniola's island-Paradise !  
Who took us for the very Gods from Heaven,  
And we have sent them very fiends from Hell ;  
And I myself, myself not blameless, I  
Could sometimes wish I had never led the way.

Only the ghost of our great Catholic Queen  
Smiles on me, saying, ' Be thou comforted !  
This creedless people will be brought to Christ  
And own the holy governance of Rome.'

But who could dream that we, who bore the Cross  
Thither, were excommunicated there,  
For curbing crimes that scandalised the Cross,  
By him, the Catalonian Minorite,  
Rome's Vicar in our Indies ? who believe  
These hard memorials of our truth to Spain  
Clung closer to us for a longer term

Than any friend of ours at Court? and yet  
Pardon—too harsh, unjust. I am rack'd with pains.

You see that I have hung them by my bed,  
And I will have them buried in my grave.

Sir, in that flight of ages which are God's  
Own voice to justify the dead—perchance  
Spain once the most chivalric race on earth,  
Spain then the mightiest, wealthiest realm on earth,  
So made by me, may seek to unbury me,  
To lay me in some shrine of this old Spain,  
Or in that vaster Spain I leave to Spain.  
Then some one standing by my grave will say,  
'Behold the bones of Christopher Colòn'—  
'Ay, but the chains, what do *they* mean—the chains?'—  
I sorrow for that kindly child of Spain  
Who then will have to answer, 'These same chains  
Bound these same bones back thro' the Atlantic sea,  
Which he unchain'd for all the world to come.'

O Queen of Heaven who seest the souls in Hell  
And purgatory, I suffer all as much  
As they do—for the moment. Stay, my son  
Is here anon: my son will speak for me  
Ablier than I can in these spasms that grind  
Bone against bone. You will not. One last word.



You move about the Court, I pray you tell  
King Ferdinand who plays with me, that one,  
Whose life has been no play with him and his  
Hidalgos—shipwrecks, famines, fevers, fights,  
Mutinies, treacheries—wink'd at, and condoned—  
That I am loyal to him till the death,  
And ready—tho' our Holy Catholic Queen,  
Who fain had pledged her jewels on my first voyage,  
Whose hope was mine to spread the Catholic faith,  
Who wept with me when I return'd in chains,  
Who sits beside the blessed Virgin now,  
To whom I send my prayer by night and day—  
She is gone—but you will tell the King, that I,  
Rack'd as I am with gout, and wrench'd with pains  
Gain'd in the service of His Highness, yet  
Am ready to sail forth on one last voyage,  
And readier, if the King would hear, to lead  
One last crusade against the Saracen,  
And save the Holy Sepulchre from thrall.

Going? I am old and slighted : you have dared  
Somewhat perhaps in coming? my poor thanks!  
I am but an alien and a Genovese.

## THE VOYAGE OF MAELDUNE.

(FOUNDED ON AN IRISH LEGEND. A.D. 700.)

### I.

I WAS the chief of the race—he had stricken my  
father dead—  
But I gather'd my fellows together, I swore I would  
strike off his head.  
Each of them look'd like a king, and was noble in  
birth as in worth,  
And each of them boasted he sprang from the oldest  
race upon earth.  
Each was as brave in the fight as the bravest hero of  
song,  
And each of them liefer had died than have done one  
another a wrong.  
*He* lived on an isle in the ocean—we sail'd on a  
Friday morn—  
He that had slain my father the day before I was  
born.

## II.

And we came to the isle in the ocean, and there on  
the shore was he.

But a sudden blast blew us out and away thro' a  
boundless sea.

## III.

And we came to the Silent Isle that we never had  
touch'd at before,

Where a silent ocean always broke on a silent shore,  
And the brooks glitter'd on in the light without sound,  
and the long waterfalls

Pour'd in a thunderless plunge to the base of the  
mountain walls,

And the poplar and cypress unshaken by storm  
flourish'd up beyond sight,

And the pine shot aloft from the crag to an unbeliev-  
able height,

And high in the heaven above it there flicker'd a  
songless lark,

And the cock couldn't crow, and the bull couldn't  
low, and the dog couldn't bark.

And round it we went, and thro' it, but never a mur-  
mur, a breath—

It was all of it fair as life, it was all of it quiet as death,

And we hated the beautiful Isle, for whenever we  
    strove to speak  
Our voices were thinner and fainter than any flitter-  
    mouse-shriek ;  
And the men that were mighty of tongue and could  
    raise such a battle-cry  
That a hundred who heard it would rush on a thou-  
    sand lances and die—  
O they to be dumb'd by the charm !—so fluster'd with  
    anger were they  
They almost fell on each other ; but after we sail'd  
    away.

## IV.

And we came to the Isle of Shouting, we landed, a  
    score of wild birds  
Cried from the topmost summit with human voices  
    and words ;  
Once in an hour they cried, and whenever their voices  
    peal'd  
The steer fell down at the plow and the harvest died  
    from the field,  
And the men dropt dead in the valleys and half of  
    the cattle went lame,  
And the roof sank in on the hearth, and the dwelling  
    broke into flame ;

And the shouting of these wild birds ran into the  
    hearts of my crew,  
Till they shouted along with the shouting and seized  
    one another and slew ;  
But I drew them the one from the other ; I saw that  
    we could not stay,  
And we left the dead to the birds and we sail'd with  
    our wounded away.

## V.

And we came to the Isle of Flowers : their breath met  
    us out on the seas,  
For the Spring and the middle Summer sat each on  
    the lap of the breeze ;  
And the red passion-flower to the cliffs, and the dark-  
    blue clematis, clung,  
And starr'd with a myriad blossom the long convol-  
    vulus hung ;  
And the topmost spire of the mountain was lilies in  
    lieu of snow,  
And the lilies like glaciers winded down, running out  
    below  
Thro' the fire of the tulip and poppy, the blaze of  
    gorse, and the blush  
Of millions of roses that sprang without leaf or a thorn  
    from the bush ;

And the whole isle-side flashing down from the peak  
without ever a tree  
Swept like a torrent of gems from the sky to the blue  
of the sea ;  
And we roll'd upon capes of crocus and vaunted our  
kith and our kin,  
And we wallow'd in beds of lilies, and chanted the  
triumph of Finn,  
Till each like a golden image was pollen'd from head  
to feet  
And each was as dry as a cricket, with thirst in the  
middle-day heat.  
Blossom and blossom, and promise of blossom, but  
never a fruit !  
And we hated the Flowering Isle, as we hated the isle  
that was mute,  
And we tore up the flowers by the million and flung  
them in bight and bay,  
And we left but a naked rock, and in anger we sail'd  
away.

## VI.

And we came to the Isle of Fruits : all round from  
the cliffs and the capes,  
Purple or amber, dangled a hundred fathom of grapes,  
And the warm melon lay like a little sun on the tawny  
sand,

And the fig ran up from the beach and rioted over  
the land,  
And the mountain arose like a jewell'd throne thro'  
the fragrant air,  
Glowing with all-colour'd plums and with golden  
masses of pear,  
And the crimson and scarlet of berries that flamed  
upon bine and vine,  
But in every berry and fruit was the poisonous pleasure  
of wine ;  
And the peak of the mountain was apples, the hugest  
that ever were seen,  
And they prest, as they grew, on each other, with  
hardly a leaflet between,  
And all of them redder than rosiest health or than  
utterest shame,  
And setting, when Even descended, the very sunset  
aflame ;  
And we stay'd three days, and we gorged and we  
madden'd, till every one drew  
His sword on his fellow to slay him, and ever they  
struck and they slew ;  
And myself, I had eaten but sparely, and fought till I  
sunder'd the fray,  
Then I bad them remember my father's death, and  
we sail'd away.

## VII.

And we came to the Isle of Fire : we were lured by  
the light from afar,  
For the peak sent up one league of fire to the Northern  
Star ;  
Lured by the glare and the blare, but scarcely could  
stand upright,  
For the whole isle shudder'd and shook like a man in  
a mortal affright ;  
We were giddy besides with the fruits we had gorged,  
and so crazed that at last  
There were some leap'd into the fire ; and away we  
sail'd, and we past  
Over that undersea isle, where the water is clearer  
than air :  
Down we look'd : what a garden ! O bliss, what a  
Paradise there !  
Towers of a happier time, low down in a rainbow  
deep  
Silent palaces, quiet fields of eternal sleep !  
And three of the gentlest and best of my people,  
whate'er I could say,  
Plunged head down in the sea, and the Paradise  
trembled away.



## VIII.

And we came to the Bounteous Isle, where the  
    heavens lean low on the land,  
And ever at dawn from the cloud glitter'd o'er us a  
    sunbright hand,  
Then it open'd and dropt at the side of each man,  
    as he rose from his rest,  
Bread enough for his need till the labourless day dipt  
    under the West ;  
And we wander'd about it and thro' it. O never was  
    time so good !  
And we sang of the triumphs of Finn, and the boast  
    of our ancient blood,  
And we gazed at the wandering wave as we sat by the  
    gurgle of springs,  
And we chanted the songs of the Bards and the  
    glories of fairy kings ;  
But at length we began to be weary, to sigh, and to  
    stretch and yawn,  
Till we hated the Bounteous Isle and the sunbright  
    hand of the dawn,  
For there was not an enemy near, but the whole green  
    Isle was our own,  
And we took to playing at ball, and we took to throw-  
    ing the stone,

And we took to playing at battle, but that was a  
perilous play,  
For the passion of battle was in us, we slew and we  
sail'd away.

## IX.

And we past to the Isle of Witches and heard their  
musical cry—  
'Come to us, O come, come' in the stormy red of a sky  
Dashing the fires and the shadows of dawn on the  
beautiful shapes,  
For a wild witch naked as heaven stood on each of  
the loftiest capes,  
And a hundred ranged on the rock like white sea-  
birds in a row,  
And a hundred gamboll'd and pranced on the wrecks  
in the sand below,  
And a hundred splash'd from the ledges, and bosom'd  
the burst of the spray,  
But I knew we should fall on each other, and hastily  
sail'd away.

## X.

And we came in an evil time to the Isle of the Double  
Towers,  
One was of smooth-cut stone, one carved all over with  
flowers,

But an earthquake always moved in the hollows under  
the dells,  
And they shock'd on each other and butted each other  
with clashing of bells,  
And the daws flew out of the Towers and jangled and  
wrangled in vain,  
And the clash and boom of the bells rang into the  
heart and the brain,  
Till the passion of battle was on us, and all took sides  
with the Towers,  
There were some for the clean-cut stone, there were  
more for the carven flowers,  
And the wrathful thunder of God peal'd over us all  
the day,  
For the one half slew the other, and after we sail'd  
away.

## XI.

And we came to the Isle of a Saint who had sail'd  
with St. Brendan of yore,  
He had lived ever since on the Isle and his winters  
were fifteen score,  
And his voice was low as from other worlds, and his  
eyes were sweet,  
And his white hair sank to his heels and his white  
beard fell to his feet,

And he spake to me, 'O Maeldune, let be this purpose  
of thine !

Remember the words of the Lord when he told us  
" Vengeance is mine !"

His fathers have slain thy fathers in war or in single  
strife,

Thy fathers have slain his fathers, each taken a life  
for a life,

Thy father had slain his father, how long shall the  
murder last ?

Go back to the Isle of Finn and suffer the Past to be  
Past.'

And we kiss'd the fringe of his beard and we pray'd  
as we heard him pray,

And the Holy man he assoil'd us, and sadly we sail'd  
away.

## XII.

And we came to the Isle we were blown from, and  
there on the shore was he,

The man that had slain my father. I saw him and let  
him be.

O weary was I of the travel, the trouble, the strife and  
the sin,

When I landed again, with a tithe of my men, on the  
Isle of Finn.

## DE PROFUNDIS :

### THE TWO GREETINGS.

#### I.

OUT of the deep, my child, out of the deep,  
Where all that was to be, in all that was,  
Whirl'd for a million æons thro' the vast  
Waste dawn of multitudinous-eddy light—  
Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,  
Thro' all this changing world of changeless law,  
And every phase of ever-heightening life,  
And nine long months of antenatal gloom,  
With this last moon, this crescent—her dark orb  
Touch'd with earth's light—thou comest, darling boy;  
Our own ; a babe in lineament and limb  
Perfect, and prophet of the perfect man ;  
Whose face and form are hers and mine in one,  
Indissolubly married like our love ;  
Live, and be happy in thyself, and serve  
This mortal race thy kin so well, that men

May bless thee as we bless thee, O young life  
Breaking with laughter from the dark ; and may  
The fated channel where thy motion lives  
Be prosperously shaped, and sway thy course  
Along the years of haste and random youth  
Unshatter'd ; then full-current thro' full man ;  
And last in kindly curves, with gentlest fall,  
By quiet fields, a slowly-dying power,  
To that last deep where we and thou are still.

## II.

## I.

OUT of the deep, my child, out of the deep,  
From that great deep, before our world begins,  
Whereon the Spirit of God moves as he will—  
Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,  
From that true world within the world we see,  
Whereof our world is but the bounding shore—  
Out of the deep, Spirit, out of the deep,  
With this ninth moon, that sends the hidden sun  
Down yon dark sea, thou comest, darling boy.

## II.

For in the world, which is not ours, They said  
'Let us make man ' and that which should be man,

From that one light no man can look upon,  
Drew to this shore lit by the suns and moons  
And all the shadows. O dear Spirit half-lost  
In thine own shadow and this fleshly sign  
That thou art thou—who wailest being born  
And banish'd into mystery, and the pain  
Of this divisible-indivisible world  
Among the numerable-innumerable  
Sun, sun, and sun, thro' finite-infinite space  
In finite-infinite Time—our mortal veil  
And shatter'd phantom of that infinite One,  
Who made thee unconceivably Thyself  
Out of His whole World-self and all in all—  
Live thou ! and of the grain and husk, the grape  
And ivyberry, choose ; and still depart  
From death to death thro' life and life, and find  
Nearer and ever nearer Him, who wrought  
Not Matter, nor the finite-infinite,  
But this main-miracle, that thou art thou,  
With power on thine own act and on the world.

## THE HUMAN CRY.

## I.

HALLOWED be Thy name—Halleluiah !—  
Infinite Ideality !  
Immeasurable Reality !  
Infinite Personality !  
Hallowed be Thy name—Halleluiah !

## II.

We feel we are nothing—for all is Thou and in Thee ;  
We feel we are something—*that* also has come from  
Thee ;  
We know we are nothing—but Thou wilt help us to be.  
Hallowed be Thy name—Halleluiah !



## PREFATORY SONNET

TO THE 'NINETEENTH CENTURY.'

THOSE that of late had fled far and fast  
To touch all shores, now leaving to the skill  
Of others their old craft seaworthy still,  
Have charter'd this ; where, mindful of the past  
Our true co-mates regather round the mast ;  
Of diverse tongue, but with a common will  
Here, in this roaring moon of daffodil  
And crocus, to put forth and brave the blast ;  
For some, descending from the sacred peak  
Of hoar high-templed Faith, have leagued again  
Their lot with ours to rove the world about ;  
And some are wilder comrades, sworn to seek  
If any golden harbour be for men  
In seas of Death and sunless gulfs of Doubt.

TO THE REV. W. H. BROOKFIELD

BROOKS, for they call'd you so that knew you best,  
Old Brooks, who loved so well to mouth my rhymes,  
How oft we two have heard St. Mary's chimes !  
How oft the Cantab supper, host and guest,  
Would echo helpless laughter to your jest !  
How oft with him we paced that walk of limes,  
Him, the lost light of those dawn-golden times,  
Who loved you well ! Now both are gone to rest  
You man of humorous-melancholy mark,  
Dead of some inward agony—is it so ?  
Our kindlier, trustier Jaques, past away !  
I cannot laud this life, it looks so dark :  
Σκιᾶς ὄναρ—dream of a shadow, go—  
God bless you. I shall join you in a day.

## MONTENEGRO.

THEY rose to where their sovran eagle sails,  
They kept their faith, their freedom, on the height,  
Chaste, frugal, savage, arm'd by day and night  
Against the Turk ; whose inroad nowhere scales  
Their headlong passes, but his footstep fails,  
And red with blood the Crescent reels from fight  
Before their dauntless hundreds, in prone flight  
By thousands down the crags and thro' the vales.  
O smallest among peoples ! rough rock-throne  
Of Freedom ! warriors beating back the swarm  
Of Turkish Islam for five hundred years,  
Great Tsernogora ! never since thine own  
Black ridges drew the cloud and brake the storm  
Has breathed a race of mightier mountaineers.

## TO VICTOR HUGO.

VICTOR in Drama, Victor in Romance,  
Cloud-weaver of phantasmal hopes and fears,  
French of the French, and Lord of human tears ;  
Child-lover ; Bard whose fame-lit laurels glance  
Darkening the wreaths of all that would advance,  
Beyond our strait, their claim to be thy peers ;  
Weird Titan by thy winter weight of years  
As yet unbroken, Stormy voice of France !  
Who dost not love our England—so they say ;  
I know not—England, France, all man to be  
Will make one people ere man's race be run :  
And I, desiring that diviner day,  
Yield thee full thanks for thy full courtesy  
To younger England in the boy my son.

TRANSLATIONS, ETC.



## BATTLE OF BRUNANBURH.

Constantinus, King of the Scots, after having sworn allegiance to Athelstan, allied himself with the Danes of Ireland under Anlaf, and invading England, was defeated by Athelstan and his brother Edmund with great slaughter at Brunanburh in the year 937.

### I

<sup>1</sup> ATHELSTAN King,  
Lord among Earls,  
Bracelet-bestower and  
Baron of Barons,  
He with his brother,  
Edmund Atheling,  
Gaining a lifelong  
Glory in battle,  
Slew with the sword-edge  
There by Brunanburh,  
Brake the shield-wall,

<sup>1</sup> I have more or less availed myself of my son's prose translation of this poem in the *Contemporary Review* (November 1876).

Hew'd the lindenwood,<sup>1</sup>  
Hack'd the battleshield,  
Sons of Edward with hammer'd brands.

## II.

Theirs was a greatness  
Got from their Grandsires—  
Theirs that so often in  
Strife with their enemies  
Struck for their hoards and their hearths and  
their homes.

## III.

Bow'd the spoiler,  
Bent the Scotsman,  
Fell the shipcrews  
Doom'd to the death.  
All the field with blood of the fighters  
Flow'd, from when first the great  
Sun-star of morningtide,  
Lamp of the Lord God  
Lord everlasting,  
Glode over earth till the glorious creature  
Sank to his setting.

<sup>1</sup> Shields of lindenwood.



## IV.

There lay many a man  
Marr'd by the javelin,  
Men of the Northland  
Shot over shield.  
There was the Scotsman  
Weary of war.

## V.

We the West-Saxons,  
Long as the daylight  
Lasted, in companies  
Troubled the track of the host that we hated,  
Grimly with swords that were sharp from the  
grindstone,  
Fiercely we hack'd at the flyers before us.

## VI.

Mighty the Mercian,  
Hard was his hand-play,  
Sparing not any of  
Those that with Anlaf,  
Warriors over the  
Weltering waters  
Borne in the bark's-bosom,

Drew to this island :  
Doom'd to the death.

## VII.

Five young kings put asleep by the sword-stroke,  
Seven strong Earls of the army of Anlaf  
Fell on the war-field, numberless numbers,  
Shipmen and Scotsmen.

## VIII.

Then the Norse leader,  
Dire was his need of it,  
Few were his following,  
Fled to his warship :  
Fleeted his vessel to sea with the king in it,  
Saving his life on the fallow flood.

## IX.

Also the crafty one,  
Constantinus,  
Crept to his North again,  
Hoar-headed hero !

## X.

Slender warrant had  
*He* to be proud of

The welcome of war-knives—  
He that was reft of his  
Folk and his friends that had  
Fallen in conflict,  
Leaving his son too  
Lost in the carnage,  
Mangled to morsels,  
A youngster in war !

## XI.

Slender reason had  
*He* to be glad of  
The clash of the war-glaive—  
Traitor and trickster  
And spurner of treaties—  
He nor had Anlaf  
With armies so broken  
A reason for bragging  
That they had the better  
In perils of battle  
On places of slaughter—  
The struggle of standards,  
The rush of the javelins,  
The crash of the charges,<sup>1</sup>  
The wielding of weapons—

<sup>1</sup> Lit. 'the gathering of men.'

The play that they play'd with  
The children of Edward.

## XII.

Then with their nail'd prows  
Parted the Norsemen, a  
Blood-redden'd relic of  
Javelins over  
The jarring breaker, the deep-sea billow,  
Shaping their way toward Dyflen<sup>1</sup> again,  
Shamed in their souls.

## XIII.

Also the brethren,  
King and Atheling,  
Each in his glory,  
Went to his own in his own West-Saxonland,  
Glad of the war.

## XIV.

Many a carcase they left to be carrion,  
Many a livid one, many a sallow-skin—  
Left for the white-tail'd eagle to tear it, and  
Left for the horny-nibb'd raven to rend it, and

<sup>1</sup> Dublin.

Gave to the garbaging war-hawk to gorge it, and  
That gray beast, the wolf of the weald.

## XV.

Never had huger  
Slaughter of heroes  
Slain by the sword-edge—  
Such as old writers  
Have writ of in histories—  
Hapt in this isle, since  
Up from the East hither  
Saxon and Angle from  
Over the broad billow  
Broke into Britain with  
Haughty war-workers who  
Harried the Welshman, when  
Earls that were lured by the  
Hunger of glory gat  
Hold of the land.

## ACHILLES OVER THE TRENCH.

ILIAD, xviii. 202.

So saying, light-foot Iris pass'd away.  
Then rose Achilles dear to Zeus ; and round  
The warrior's puissant shoulders Pallas flung  
Her fringed ægis, and around his head  
The glorious goddess wreath'd a golden cloud,  
And from it lighted an all-shining flame.  
As when a smoke from a city goes to heaven  
Far off from out an island girt by foes,  
All day the men contend in grievous war  
From their own city, but with set of sun  
Their fires flame thickly, and aloft the glare  
Flies streaming, if perchance the neighbours round  
May see, and sail to help them in the war ;  
So from his head the splendour went to heaven.  
From wall to dyke he stept, he stood, nor join'd  
The Achæans—honouring his wise mother's word  
There standing, shouted, and Pallas far away  
Call'd ; and a boundless panic shook the foe.

For like the clear voice when a trumpet shrills,  
Blown by the fierce beleaguerers of a town,  
So rang the clear voice of *Æakidês* ;  
And when the brazen cry of *Æakidês*  
Was heard among the Trojans, all their hearts  
Were troubled, and the full-maned horses whirl'd  
The chariots backward, knowing griefs at hand ;  
And sheer-astounded were the charioteers  
To see the dread, unweariable fire  
That always o'er the great *Peleion's* head  
Burn'd, for the bright-eyed goddess made it burn.  
Thrice from the dyke he sent his mighty shout,  
Thrice backward reel'd the Trojans and allies ;  
And there and then twelve of their noblest died  
Among their spears and chariots.

TO PRINCESS FREDERICA ON HER  
MARRIAGE.

O you that were eyes and light to the King till he  
past away

From the darkness of life—

He saw not his daughter—he blest her: the blind

King sees you to-day,

He blesses the wife.



SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.

ON THE CENOTAPH IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

NOT here ! the white North has thy bones ; and thou,  
Heroic sailor-soul,  
Art passing on thine happier voyage now  
Toward no earthly pole.

## TO DANTE.

(WRITTEN AT REQUEST OF THE FLORENTINES.)

KING, that hast reign'd six hundred years, and grown  
In power, and ever growest, since thine own  
Fair Florence honouring thy nativity,  
Thy Florence now the crown of Italy,  
Hath sought the tribute of a verse from me,  
I, wearing but the garland of a day,  
Cast at thy feet one flower that fades away.

TIRESIAS  
AND OTHER POEMS



TO E. FITZGERALD.

OLD FITZ, who from your suburb grange,  
Where once I tarried for a while,  
Glance at the wheeling Orb of change,  
And greet it with a kindly smile ;  
Whom yet I see as there you sit  
Beneath your sheltering garden-tree,  
And while your doves about you flit,  
And plant on shoulder, hand and knee,  
Or on your head their rosy feet,  
As if they knew your diet spares  
Whatever moved in that full sheet  
Let down to Peter at his prayers ;  
Who live on milk and meal and grass ;  
And once for ten long weeks I tried  
Your table of Pythagoras,  
And seem'd at first 'a thing enskied'  
(As Shakespeare has it) airy-light  
To float above the ways of men,

Then fell from that half-spiritual height  
Chill'd, till I tasted flesh again  
One night when earth was winter-black,  
And all the heavens flash'd in frost ;  
And on me, half-asleep, came back  
That wholesome heat the blood had lost,  
And set me climbing icy capes  
And glaciers, over which there roll'd  
To meet me long-arm'd vines with grapes  
Of Eshcol hugeness ; for the cold  
Without, and warmth within me, wrought  
To mould the dream ; but none can say  
That Lenten fare makes Lenten thought,  
Who reads your golden Eastern lay,  
Than which I know no version done  
In English more divinely well ;  
A planet equal to the sun  
Which cast it, that large infidel  
Your Omar ; and your Omar drew  
Full-handed plaudits from our best  
In modern letters, and from two,  
Old friends outvaluing all the rest,  
Two voices heard on earth no more ;  
But we old friends are still alive,  
And I am nearing seventy-four,  
While you have touch'd at seventy-five,  
And so I send a birthday line

Of greeting ; and my son, who dipt  
In some forgotten book of mine  
With sallow scraps of manuscript,  
And dating many a year ago,  
Has hit on this, which you will take  
My Fitz, and welcome, as I know  
Less for its own than for the sake  
Of one recalling gracious times,  
When, in our younger London days,  
You found some merit in my rhymes,  
And I more pleasure in your praise.

## TIRESIAS.

I WISH I were as in the years of old,  
While yet the blessed daylight made itself  
Ruddy thro' both the roofs of sight, and woke  
These eyes, now dull, but then so keen to seek  
The meanings ambush'd under all they saw,  
The flight of birds, the flame of sacrifice,  
What omens may foreshadow fate to man  
And woman, and the secret of the Gods.

My son, the Gods, despite of human prayer,  
Are slower to forgive than human kings.  
The great God, Arês, burns in anger still  
Against the guiltless heirs of him from Tyre,  
Our Cadmus, out of whom thou art, who found  
Beside the springs of Dircê, smote, and still'd  
Thro' all its folds the multitudinous beast,  
The dragon, which our trembling fathers call'd  
The God's own son.

A tale, that told to me,  
When but thine age, by age as winter-white



As mine is now, amazed, but made me yearn  
For larger glimpses of that more than man  
Which rolls the heavens, and lifts, and lays the deep,  
Yet loves and hates with mortal hates and loves,  
And moves unseen among the ways of men.

Then, in my wanderings all the lands that lie  
Subjected to the Heliconian ridge  
Have heard this footstep fall, altho' my wont  
Was more to scale the highest of the heights  
With some strange hope to see the nearer God.

One naked peak—the sister of the sun  
Would climb from out the dark, and linger there  
To silver all the valleys with her shafts—  
There once, but long ago, five-fold thy term  
Of years, I lay ; the winds were dead for heat ;  
The noonday crag made the hand burn ; and sick  
For shadow—not one bush was near—I rose  
Following a torrent till its myriad falls  
Found silence in the hollows underneath.

There in a secret olive-glade I saw  
Pallas Athene climbing from the bath  
In anger ; yet one glittering foot disturb'd  
The lucid well ; one snowy knee was prest  
Against the margin flowers ; a dreadful light  
Came from her golden hair, her golden helm  
And all her golden armour on the grass,  
And from her virgin breast, and virgin eyes

Remaining fixt on mine, till mine grew dark  
For ever, and I heard a voice that said  
'Henceforth be blind, for thou hast seen too much,  
And speak the truth that no man may believe.'

Son, in the hidden world of sight, that lives  
Behind this darkness, I behold her still,  
Beyond all work of those who carve the stone,  
Beyond all dreams of Godlike womanhood,  
Ineffable beauty, out of whom, at a glance,  
And as it were, perforce, upon me flash'd  
The power of prophesying—but to me  
No power—so chain'd and coupled with the curse  
Of blindness and their unbelief, who heard  
And heard not, when I spake of famine, plague,  
Shrine-shattering earthquake, fire, flood, thunderbolt,  
And angers of the Gods for evil done  
And expiation lack'd—no power on Fate,  
'Theirs, or mine own ! for when the crowd would roar  
For blood, for war, whose issue was their doom,  
To cast wise words among the multitude  
Was flinging fruit to lions ; nor, in hours  
Of civil outbreak, when I knew the twain  
Would each waste each, and bring on both the yoke  
Of stronger states, was mine the voice to curb  
The madness of our cities and their kings.

Who ever turn'd upon his heel to hear  
My warning that the tyranny of one

Was prelude to the tyranny of all?  
My counsel that the tyranny of all  
Led backward to the tyranny of one?

This power hath work'd no good to aught that  
lives,

And these blind hands were useless in their wars.  
O therefore that the unfulfill'd desire,  
The grief for ever born from griefs to be,  
The boundless yearning of the Prophet's heart—  
Could *that* stand forth, and like a statue, rear'd  
To some great citizen, win all praise from all  
Who past it, saying, 'That was he!'

In vain!

Virtue must shape itself in deed, and those  
Whom weakness or necessity have cramp'd  
Within themselves, immerging, each, his urn  
In his own well, draw solace as he may.

Menœceus, thou hast eyes, and I can hear  
Too plainly what full tides of onset sap  
Our seven high gates, and what a weight of war  
Rides on those ringing axles! jingle of bits,  
Shouts, arrows, tramp of the hornfooted horse  
That grind the glebe to powder! Stony showers  
Of that ear-stunning hail of Arês crash  
Along the sounding walls. Above, below,  
Shock after shock, the song-built towers and gates  
Reel, bruised and butted with the shuddering

War-thunder of iron rams ; and from within  
The city comes a murmur void of joy,  
Lest she be taken captive—maidens, wives,  
And mothers with their babblers of the dawn,  
And oldest age in shadow from the night,  
Falling about their shrines before their Gods,  
And wailing ‘Save us.’

And they wail to thee !

These eyeless eyes, that cannot see thine own,  
See this, that only in thy virtue lies  
The saving of our Thebes ; for, yesternight,  
To me, the great God Arês, whose one bliss  
Is war, and human sacrifice—himself  
Blood-red from battle, spear and helmet tipt  
With stormy light as on a mast at sea,  
Stood out before a darkness, crying ‘Thebes,  
Thy Thebes shall fall and perish, for I loathe  
The seed of Cadmus—yet if one of these  
By his own hand—if one of these——’

My son,

No sound is breathed so potent to coerce,  
And to conciliate, as their names who dare  
For that sweet mother land which gave them birth  
Nobly to do, nobly to die. Their names,  
Graven on memorial columns, are a song  
Heard in the future ; few, but more than wall  
And rampart, their examples reach a hand

Far thro' all years, and everywhere they meet  
 And kindle generous purpose, and the strength  
 To mould it into action pure as theirs.

Fairer thy fate than mine, if life's best end  
 Be to end well ! and thou refusing this,  
 Unvenerable will thy memory be  
 While men shall move the lips : but if thou dare—  
 Thou, one of these, the race of Cadmus—then  
 No stone is fitted in yon marble girth  
 Whose echo shall not tongue thy glorious doom,  
 Nor in this pavement but shall ring thy name  
 To every hoof that clangs it, and the springs  
 Of Dircê laving yonder battle-plain,  
 Heard from the roofs by night, will murmur thee  
 To thine own Thebes, while 'Thebes thro' thee shall  
     stand  
 Firm-based with all her Gods.

The Dragon's cave

Half hid, they tell me, now in flowing vines—  
 Where once he dwelt and whence he roll'd himself  
 At dead of night—thou knowest, and that smooth  
     rock

Before it, altar-fashion'd, where of late  
 The woman-breasted Sphinx, with wings drawn back,  
 Folded her lion paws, and look'd to Thebes.  
 There blanch the bones of whom she slew, and these  
 Mixt with her own, because the fierce beast found

A wiser than herself, and dash'd herself  
Dead in her rage : but thou art wise enough,  
Tho' young, to love thy wiser, blunt the curse  
Of Pallas, hear, and tho' I speak the truth  
Believe I speak it, let thine own hand strike  
Thy youthful pulses into rest and quench  
The red God's anger, fearing not to plunge  
Thy torch of life in darkness, rather—thou  
Rejoicing that the sun, the moon, the stars  
Send no such light upon the ways of men  
As one great deed.

Thither, my son, and there  
Thou, that hast never known the embrace of love,  
Offer thy maiden life.

This useless hand !  
I felt one warm tear fall upon it. Gone !  
He will achieve his greatness.

But for me,  
I would that I were gather'd to my rest,  
And mingled with the famous kings of old,  
On whom about their ocean-islets flash  
The faces of the Gods—the wise man's word,  
Here trampled by the populace underfoot,  
There crown'd with worship—and these eyes will find  
The men I knew, and watch the chariot whirl  
About the goal again, and hunters race  
The shadowy lion, and the warrior-kings,

In height and prowess more than human, strive  
Again for glory, while the golden lyre  
Is ever sounding in heroic ears  
Heroic hymns, and every way the vales  
Wind, clouded with the grateful incense-fume  
Of those who mix all odour to the Gods  
On one far height in one far-shining fire.

---

‘ONE height and one far-shining fire’  
And while I fancied that my friend  
For this brief idyll would require  
A less diffuse and opulent end,  
And would defend his judgment well,  
If I should deem it over nice—  
The tolling of his funeral bell  
Broke on my Pagan Paradise,  
And mixt the dream of classic times,  
And all the phantoms of the dream,  
With present grief, and made the rhymes,  
That miss’d his living welcome, seem  
Like would-be guests an hour too late,  
Who down the highway moving on  
With easy laughter find the gate  
Is bolted, and the master gone.  
Gone into darkness, that full light  
Of friendship ! past, in sleep, away

By night, into the deeper night !

The deeper night ? A clearer day  
Than our poor twilight dawn on earth—

If night, what barren toil to be !  
What life, so maim'd by night, were worth

Our living out ? Not mine to me  
Remembering all the golden hours

Now silent, and so many dead,  
And him the last ; and laying flowers,

This wreath, above his honour'd head,  
And praying that, when I from hence

Shall fade with him into the unknown,  
My close of earth's experience

May prove as peaceful as his own.



## THE WRECK.

### I.

HIDE me, Mother! my Fathers belong'd to the  
church of old,  
I am driven by storm and sin and death to the  
ancient fold,  
I cling to the Catholic Cross once more, to the Faith  
that saves,  
My brain is full of the crash of wrecks, and the roar  
of waves,  
My life itself is a wreck, I have sullied a noble name,  
I am flung from the rushing tide of the world as a  
waif of shame,  
I am roused by the wail of a child, and awake to a  
livid light,  
And a ghastlier face than ever has haunted a grave  
by night,  
I would hide from the storm without, I would flee  
from the storm within,

I would make my life one prayer for a soul that died  
in his sin,  
I was the tempter, Mother, and mine was the deeper  
fall ;  
I will sit at your feet, I will hide my face, I will tell  
you all.

## II.

He that they gave me to, Mother, a heedless and  
innocent bride—  
I never have wrong'd his heart, I have only wounded  
his pride—  
Spain in his blood and the Jew——dark-visaged,  
stately and tall—  
A princelier-looking man never stept thro' a Prince's  
hall.  
And who, when his anger was kindled, would venture  
to give him the nay ?  
And a man men fear is a man to be loved by the  
women they say.  
And I could have loved him too, if the blossom can  
doat on the blight,  
Or the young green leaf rejoice in the frost that sears  
it at night ;  
He would open the books that I prized, and toss  
them away with a yawn,

Repell'd by the magnet of Art to the which my nature  
was drawn,  
The word of the Poet by whom the deeps of the  
world are stirr'd,  
The music that robes it in language beneath and  
beyond the word !  
My Shelley would fall from my hands when he cast  
a contemptuous glance  
From where he was poring over his Tables of Trade  
and Finance ;  
My hands, when I heard him coming would drop  
from the chords or the keys,  
But ever I fail'd to please him, however I strove to  
please—  
All day long far-off in the cloud of the city, and there  
Lost, head and heart, in the chances of dividend,  
consol, and share—  
And at home if I sought for a kindly caress, being  
woman and weak,  
His formal kiss fell chill as a flake of snow on the  
cheek :  
And so, when I bore him a girl, when I held it aloft  
in my joy,  
He look'd at it coldly, and said to me ' Pity it isn't a  
boy.'  
The one thing given me, to love and to live for,  
glanced at in scorn !

The child that I felt I could die for—as if she were  
basely born !  
I had lived a wild-flower life, I was planted now in a  
tomb ;  
The daisy will shut to the shadow, I closed my heart  
to the gloom ;  
I threw myself all abroad—I would play my part with  
the young  
By the low foot-lights of the world—and I caught the  
wreath that was flung.

## III.

Mother, I have not—however their tongues may have  
babbled of me—  
Sinn'd thro' an animal vileness, for all but a dwarf  
was he,  
And all but a hunchback too ; and I look'd at him,  
first, askance  
With pity—not he the knight for an amorous girl's  
romance !  
Tho' wealthy enough to have bask'd in the light of a  
dowerless smile,  
Having lands at home and abroad in a rich West-  
Indian isle ;  
But I came on him once at a ball, the heart of a  
listening crowd—

Why, what a brow was there ! he was seated—speaking aloud

To women, the flower of the time, and men at the helm of state—

Flowing with easy greatness and touching on all things great,

Science, philosophy, song—till I felt myself ready to weep

For I knew not what, when I heard that voice,—as mellow and deep

As a psalm by a mighty master and peal'd from an organ,—roll

Rising and falling—for, Mother, the voice was the voice of the soul ;

And the sun of the soul made day in the dark of his wonderful eyes.

Here was the hand that would help me, would heal me—the heart that was wise !

And he, poor man, when he learnt that I hated the ring I wore,

He helpt me with death, and he heal'd me with sorrow for evermore.

## IV.

For I broke the bond. That day my nurse had brought me the child.

The small sweet face was flush'd, but it coo'd to the  
Mother and smiled.  
'Anything ailing,' I ask'd her, 'with baby?' She  
shook her head,  
And the Motherless Mother kiss'd it, and turn'd in  
her haste and fled.

## v.

Low warm winds had gently breathed us away from  
the land—  
Ten long sweet summer days upon deck, sitting hand  
in hand—  
When he clothed a naked mind with the wisdom and  
wealth of his own,  
And I bow'd myself down as a slave to his intellectual  
throne,  
When he coin'd into English gold some treasure of  
classical song,  
When he flouted a statesman's error, or flamed at a  
public wrong,  
When he rose as it were on the wings of an eagle  
beyond me, and past  
Over the range and the change of the world from the  
first to the last,  
When he spoke of his tropical home in the canes by  
the purple tide,

And the high star-crowns of his palms on the deep-  
wooded mountain-side,

And cliffs all robed in lianas that dropt to the brink  
of his bay,

And trees like the towers of a minster, the sons of a  
winterless day.

‘Paradise there !’ so he said, but I seem’d in Paradise  
then

With the first great love I had felt for the first and  
greatest of men ;

Ten long days of summer and sin—if it must be so—  
But days of a larger light than I ever again shall  
know—

Days that will glimmer, I fear, thro’ life to my latest  
breath ;

‘No frost there,’ so he said, ‘as in truest Love no  
Death.’

## VI.

Mother, one morning a bird with a warble plaintively  
sweet

Perch’d on the shrouds, and then fell fluttering down  
at my feet ;

I took it, he made it a cage, we fondled it, Stephen  
and I,

But it died, and I thought of the child for a moment,  
I scarce know why.

## VII.

But if sin be sin, not inherited fate, as many will say,  
My sin to my desolate little one found me at sea on  
a day,  
When her orphan wail came borne in the shriek of a  
growing wind,  
And a voice rang out in the thunders of Ocean and  
Heaven 'Thou hast sinn'd.'  
And down in the cabin were we, for the towering  
crest of the tides  
Plunged on the vessel and swept in a cataract off from  
her sides,  
And ever the great storm grew with a howl and a hoot  
of the blast  
In the rigging, voices of hell—then came the crash of  
the mast.  
'The wages of sin is death,' and there I began to  
weep,  
'I am the Jonah, the crew should cast me into the  
deep,  
For ah God, what a heart was mine to forsake her  
even for you.'  
'Never the heart among women,' he said, 'more  
tender and true.'  
'The heart! not a mother's heart, when I left my  
darling alone.'



‘Comfort yourself, for the heart of the father will care  
for his own.’

‘The heart of the father will spurn her,’ I cried, ‘for  
the sin of the wife,

The cloud of the mother’s shame will enfold her and  
darken her life.’

Then his pale face twitch’d ; ‘O Stephen, I love you,  
I love you, and yet’—

As I lean’d away from his arms—‘would God, we  
had never met!’

And he spoke not—only the storm ; till after a little,  
I yearn’d

For his voice again, and he call’d to me ‘Kiss me!’  
and there—as I turn’d—

‘The heart, the heart!’ I kiss’d him, I clung to the  
sinking form,

And the storm went roaring above us, and he—was  
out of the storm.

## VIII.

And then, then, Mother, the ship stagger’d under a  
thunderous shock,

That shook us asunder, as if she had struck and  
crash’d on a rock ;

For a huge sea smote every soul from the decks of  
The Falcon but one ;

All of them, all but the man that was lash'd to the  
helm had gone ;  
And I fell—and the storm and the days went by, but  
I knew no more—  
Lost myself—lay like the dead by the dead on the  
cabin floor,  
Dead to the death beside me, and lost to the loss that  
was mine,  
With a dim dream, now and then, of a hand giving  
bread and wine,  
Till I woke from the trance, and the ship stood still,  
and the skies were blue,  
But the face I had known, O Mother, was not the face  
that I knew.

## IX.

The strange misfeaturing mask that I saw so amazed  
me, that I  
Stumbled on deck, half mad. I would fling myself  
over and die !  
But one—he was waving a flag—the one man left on  
the wreck—  
'Woman'—he graspt at my arm—'stay there'—I  
crouch'd upon deck—  
'We are sinking, and yet there's hope : look yonder,'  
he cried, 'a sail'

In a tone so rough that I broke into passionate tears,  
and the wail  
Of a beaten babe, till I saw that a boat was nearing us  
—then  
All on a sudden I thought, I shall look on the child  
again.

## X.

They lower'd me down the side, and there in the boat  
I lay  
With sad eyes fixt on the lost sea-home, as we glided  
away,  
And I sigh'd, as the low dark hull dipt under the  
smiling main,  
'Had I stay'd with *him*, I had now—with *him*—been  
out of my pain.'

## XI.

They took us aboard: the crew were gentle, the  
captain kind;  
But *I* was the lonely slave of an often-wandering  
mind;  
For whenever a rougher gust might tumble a stormier  
wave,  
'O Stephen,' I moan'd, 'I am coming to thee in thine  
Ocean-grave.'

And again, when a balmier breeze curl'd over a peace-  
fuller sea,  
I found myself moaning again 'O child, I am coming  
to thee.'

## XII.

The broad white brow of the Isle—that bay with the  
colour'd sand—  
Rich was the rose of sunset there, as we drew to the  
land ;  
All so quiet the ripple would hardly blanch into spray  
At the feet of the cliff ; and I pray'd—'my child'—  
for I still could pray—  
'May her life be as blissfully calm, be never gloom'd  
by the curse  
Of a sin, not hers !'

Was it well with the child ?

I wrote to the nurse  
Who had borne my flower on her hireling heart ; and  
an answer came  
Not from the nurse—nor yet to the wife—to her  
maiden name !  
I shook as I open'd the letter—I knew that hand too  
well—  
And from it a scrap, clipt out of the 'deaths' in a  
paper, fell.

‘Ten long sweet summer days’ of fever, and want of  
care !

And gone—that day of the storm—O Mother, she  
came to me there.

## DESPAIR.

A man and his wife having lost faith in a God, and hope of a life to come, and being utterly miserable in this, resolve to end themselves by drowning. The woman is drowned, but the man rescued by a minister of the sect he had abandoned.

### I.

Is it you, that preach'd in the chapel there looking  
over the sand?  
Follow'd us too that night, and dogg'd us, and drew  
me to land?

### II.

What did I feel that night? You are curious. How  
should I tell?  
Does it matter so much what I felt? You rescued  
me—yet—was it well  
That you came unwish'd for, uncall'd, between me  
and the deep and my doom,  
Three days since, three more dark days of the Godless  
gloom

Of a life without sun, without health, without hope,  
without any delight  
In anything here upon earth? but ah God, that night,  
that night  
When the rolling eyes of the lighthouse there on the  
fatal neck  
Of land running out into rock—they had saved many  
hundreds from wreck—  
Glared on our way toward death, I remember I thought,  
as we past,  
Does it matter how many they saved? we are all of  
us wreck'd at last—  
'Do you fear,' and there came thro' the roar of the  
breaker a whisper, a breath,  
'Fear? am I not with you? I am frightened at life  
not death.'

## III.

And the suns of the limitless Universe sparkled and  
shone in the sky,  
Flashing with fires as of God, but we knew that their  
light was a lie—  
Bright as with deathless hope—but, however they  
sparkled and shone,  
The dark little worlds running round them were worlds  
of woe like our own—

No soul in the heaven above, no soul on the earth  
below,  
A fiery scroll written over with lamentation and woe.

## IV.

See, we were nursed in the drear night-fold of your  
fatalist creed,  
And we turn'd to the growing dawn, we had hoped  
for a dawn indeed,  
When the light of a Sun that was coming would  
scatter the ghosts of the Past,  
And the cramping creeds that had madden'd the  
peoples would vanish at last,  
And we broke away from the Christ, our human  
brother and friend,  
For He spoke, or it seem'd that He spoke, of a Hell  
without help, without end.

## V.

Hoped for a dawn and it came, but the promise had  
faded away ;  
We had past from a cheerless night to the glare of a  
drearier day ;  
He is only a cloud and a smoke who was once a pillar  
of fire,



The guess of a worm in the dust and the shadow of  
its desire—

Of a worm as it writhes in a world of the weak trodden  
down by the strong,

Of a dying worm in a world, all massacre, murder,  
and wrong.

## VI.

O we poor orphans of nothing—alone on that lonely  
shore—

Born of the brainless Nature who knew not that which  
she bore !

Trusting no longer that earthly flower would be  
heavenly fruit—

Come from the brute, poor souls—no souls—and to  
die with the brute——

## VII.

Nay, but I am not claiming your pity : I know you of  
old—

Small pity for those that have ranged from the narrow  
warmth of your fold,

Where you bawl'd the dark side of your faith and a  
God of eternal rage,

Till you flung us back on ourselves, and the human  
heart, and the Age.

## VIII.

But pity—the Pagan held it a vice—was in her and  
in me,  
Helpless, taking the place of the pitying God that  
should be !  
Pity for all that aches in the grasp of an idiot power,  
And pity for our own selves on an earth that bore not  
a flower ;  
Pity for all that suffers on land or in air or the deep,  
And pity for our own selves till we long'd for eternal  
sleep.

## IX.

‘Lightly step over the sands ! the waters—you hear  
them call !  
Life with its anguish, and horrors, and errors—away  
with it all !’  
And she laid her hand in my own—she was always  
loyal and sweet—  
Till the points of the foam in the dusk came playing  
about our feet.  
*There* was a strong sea-current would sweep us out to  
the main.  
‘Ah God’ tho’ I felt as I spoke I was taking the  
name in vain—

‘ Ah God ’ and we turn’d to each other, we kiss’d, we  
embraced, she and I,

Knowing the Love we were used to believe everlasting  
would die :

We had read their know-nothing books and we lean’d  
to the darker side—

Ah God, should we find Him, perhaps, perhaps, if we  
died, if we died ;

We never had found Him on earth, this earth is a  
fatherless Hell—

‘ Dear Love, for ever and ever, for ever and ever  
farewell,’

Never a cry so desolate, not since the world began,

Never a kiss so sad, no, not since the coming of  
man !

## x.

But the blind wave cast me ashore, and you saved  
me, a valueless life.

Not a grain of gratitude mine ! You have parted the  
man from the wife.

I am left alone on the land, she is all alone in the  
sea ;

If a curse meant ought, I would curse you for not  
having let me be.

## XI.

Visions of youth—for my brain was drunk with the  
water, it seems ;  
I had past into perfect quiet at length out of pleasant  
dreams,  
And the transient trouble of drowning—what was it  
when match'd with the pains  
Of the hellish heat of a wretched life rushing back  
thro' the veins ?

## XII.

Why should I live ? one son had forged on his father  
and fled,  
And if I believed in a God, I would thank him, the  
other is dead,  
And there was a baby-girl, that had never look'd on  
the light :  
Happiest she of us all, for she past from the night to  
the night.

## XIII.

But the crime, if a crime, of her eldest-born, her  
glory, her boast,  
Struck hard at the tender heart of the mother, and  
broke it almost ;

Tho', glory and shame dying out for ever in endless  
time,  
Does it matter so much whether crown'd for a virtue,  
or hang'd for a crime?

## XIV.

And ruin'd by *him*, by *him*, I stood there, naked,  
amazed  
In a world of arrogant opulence, fear'd myself turning  
crazed,  
And I would not be mock'd in a madhouse ! and she,  
the delicate wife,  
With a grief that could only be cured, if cured, by the  
surgeon's knife,—

## XV.

Why should we bear with an hour of torture, a moment  
of pain,  
If every man die for ever, if all his griefs are in vain,  
And the homeless planet at length will be wheel'd  
thro' the silence of space,  
Motherless evermore of an ever-vanishing race,  
When the worm shall have writhed its last, and its  
last brother-worm will have fled  
From the dead fossil skull that is left in the rocks of  
an earth that is dead ?

## XVI.

Have I crazed myself over their horrible infidel  
writings? O yes,  
For these are the new dark ages, you see, of the  
popular press,  
When the bat comes out of his cave, and the owls are  
whooping at noon,  
And Doubt is the lord of this dunghill and crows to  
the sun and the moon,  
Till the Sun and the Moon of our science are both of  
them turn'd into blood,  
And Hope will have broken her heart, running after  
a shadow of good ;  
For their knowing and know-nothing books are  
scatter'd from hand to hand—  
*We* have knelt in your know-all chapel too looking  
over the sand.

## XVII.

What! I should call on that Infinite Love that has  
served us so well?  
Infinite cruelty rather that made everlasting Hell,  
Made us, foreknew us, foredoom'd us, and does what  
he will with his own ;  
Better our dead brute mother who never has heard us  
groan !

## XVIII.

Hell? if the souls of men were immortal, as men  
have been told,  
The lecher would cleave to his lusts, and the miser  
would yearn for his gold,  
And so there were Hell for ever! but were there a God  
as you say,  
His Love would have power over Hell till it utterly  
vanish'd away.

## XIX.

Ah yet—I have had some glimmer, at times, in my  
gloomiest woe,  
Of a God behind all—after all—the great God for  
aught that I know;  
But the God of Love and of Hell together—they can-  
not be thought,  
If there be such a God, may the Great God curse him  
and bring him to nought!

## XX.

Blasphemy! whose is the fault? is it mine? for why  
would you save  
A madman to vex you with wretched words, who is  
best in his grave?

Blasphemy ! ay, why not, being damn'd beyond hope  
of grace ?

O would I were yonder with her, and away from your  
faith and your face !

Blasphemy ! true ! I have scared you pale with my  
scandalous talk,

But the blasphemy to *my* mind lies all in the way that  
you walk.

## XXI.

Hence ! she is gone ! can I stay ? can I breathe  
divorced from the Past ?

You needs must have good lynx-eyes if I do not  
escape you at last.

Our orthodox coroner doubtless will find it a felo-  
de-se,

And the stake and the cross-road, fool, if you will,  
does it matter to me ?



## THE ANCIENT SAGE.

A THOUSAND summers ere the time of Christ  
From out his ancient city came a Seer  
Whom one that loved, and honour'd him, and yet  
Was no disciple, richly garb'd, but worn  
From wasteful living, follow'd—in his hand  
A scroll of verse—till that old man before  
A cavern whence an affluent fountain pour'd  
From darkness into daylight, turn'd and spoke.

This wealth of waters might but seem to draw  
From yon dark cave, but, son, the source is higher,  
Yon summit half-a-league in air—and higher,  
The cloud that hides it—higher still, the heavens  
Whereby the cloud was moulded, and whereout  
The cloud descended. Force is from the heights.  
I am wearied of our city, son, and go  
To spend my one last year among the hills.  
What hast thou there? Some deathsong for the Ghouls  
To make their banquet relish? let me read.

“How far thro’ all the bloom and brake  
That nightingale is heard !  
What power but the bird’s could make  
This music in the bird ?  
How summer-bright are yonder skies,  
And earth as fair in hue !  
And yet what sign of aught that lies  
Behind the green and blue ?  
But man to-day is fancy’s fool  
As man hath ever been.  
The nameless Power, or Powers, that rule  
Were never heard or seen.”

If thou would’st hear the Nameless, and wilt dive  
Into the Temple-cave of thine own self,  
There, brooding by the central altar, thou  
May’st haply learn the Nameless hath a voice,  
By which thou wilt abide, if thou be wise,  
As if thou knewest, tho’ thou canst not know ;  
For Knowledge is the swallow on the lake  
That sees and stirs the surface-shadow there  
But never yet hath dipt into the abysm,  
The Abysm of all Abysms, beneath, within  
The blue of sky and sea, the green of earth,  
And in the million-millionth of a grain  
Which cleft and cleft again for evermore,  
And ever vanishing, never vanishes,

To me, my son, more mystic than myself,  
Or even than the Nameless is to me.

And when thou sendest thy free soul thro' heaven,  
Nor understandest bound nor boundlessness,  
Thou seest the Nameless of the hundred names.

And if the Nameless should withdraw from all  
Thy frailty counts most real, all thy world  
Might vanish like thy shadow in the dark.

“And since—from when this earth began—  
The Nameless never came  
Among us, never spake with man,  
And never named the Name”—

Thou canst not prove the Nameless, O my son,  
Nor canst thou prove the world thou movest in,  
Thou canst not prove that thou art body alone,  
Nor canst thou prove that thou art spirit alone,  
Nor canst thou prove that thou art both in one :  
Thou canst not prove thou art immortal, no  
Nor yet that thou art mortal—nay my son,  
Thou canst not prove that I, who speak with thee,  
Am not thyself in converse with thyself,  
For nothing worthy proving can be proven,  
Nor yet disproven : wherefore thou be wise,  
Cleave ever to the sunnier side of doubt,  
And cling to Faith beyond the forms of Faith !

She reels not in the storm of warring words,  
She brightens at the clash of 'Yes' and 'No,'  
She sees the Best that glimmers thro' the Worst,  
She feels the Sun is hid but for a night,  
She spies the summer thro' the winter bud,  
She tastes the fruit before the blossom falls,  
She hears the lark within the songless egg,  
She finds the fountain where they wail'd 'Mirage'!

“What Power? aught akin to Mind,  
The mind in me and you?  
Or power as of the Gods gone blind  
Who see not what they do?”

But some in yonder city hold, my son,  
That none but Gods could build this house of ours,  
So beautiful, vast, various, so beyond  
All work of man, yet, like all work of man,  
A beauty with defect——till That which knows,  
And is not known, but felt thro' what we feel  
Within ourselves is highest, shall descend  
On this half-deed, and shape it at the last  
According to the Highest in the Highest.

“What Power but the Years that make  
And break the vase of clay,

And stir the sleeping earth, and wake  
The bloom that fades away?  
What rulers but the Days and Hours  
That cancel weal with woe,  
And wind the front of youth with flowers,  
And cap our age with snow?"

The days and hours are ever glancing by,  
And seem to flicker past thro' sun and shade,  
Or short, or long, as Pleasure leads, or Pain;  
But with the Nameless is nor Day nor Hour;  
Tho' we, thin minds, who creep from thought to  
thought

Break into 'Thens' and 'Whens' the Eternal Now:  
This double seeming of the single world!—  
My words are like the babblings in a dream  
Of nightmare, when the babblings break the dream.  
But thou be wise in this dream-world of ours,  
Nor take thy dial for thy deity,  
But make the passing shadow serve thy will.

"The years that made the stripling wise  
Undo their work again,  
And leave him, blind of heart and eyes,  
The last and least of men;  
Who clings to earth, and once would dare  
Hell-heat or Arctic cold,

And now one breath of cooler air  
Would loose him from his hold ;  
His winter chills him to the root,  
He withers marrow and mind ;  
The kernel of the shrivell'd fruit  
Is jutting thro' the rind ;  
The tiger spasms tear his chest,  
The palsy wags his head ;  
The wife, the sons, who love him best  
Would fain that he were dead ;  
The griefs by which he once was wrung  
Were never worth the while"—

Who knows? or whether this earth-narrow life  
Be yet but yolk, and forming in the shell?

“The shaft of scorn that once had stung  
But wakes a dotard smile.”

The placid gleam of sunset after storm !

“The statesman's brain that sway'd the past  
Is feebler than his knees ;  
The passive sailor wrecks at last  
In ever-silent seas ;  
The warrior hath forgot his arms,  
The Learned all his lore ;

The changing market frets or charms  
The merchant's hope no more ;  
The prophet's beacon burn'd in vain,  
And now is lost in cloud ;  
The plowman passes, bent with pain,  
To mix with what he plow'd ;  
The poet whom his Age would quote  
As heir of endless fame—  
He knows not ev'n the book he wrote,  
Not even his own name.  
For man has overlived his day,  
And, darkening in the light,  
Scarce feels the senses break away  
To mix with ancient Night."

The shell must break before the bird can fly.

"The years that when my Youth began  
Had set the lily and rose  
By all my ways where'er they ran,  
Have ended mortal foes ;  
My rose of love for ever gone,  
My lily of truth and trust—  
They made her lily and rose in one,  
And changed her into dust.  
O rosetree planted in my grief,  
And growing, on her tomb,

Her dust is greening in your leaf,  
Her blood is in your bloom.  
O slender lily waving there,  
And laughing back the light,  
In vain you tell me 'Earth is fair'  
When all is dark as night."

My son, the world is dark with griefs and graves,  
So dark that men cry out against the Heavens.  
Who knows but that the darkness is in man?  
The doors of Night may be the gates of Light;  
For wert thou born or blind or deaf, and then  
Suddenly heal'd, how would'st thou glory in all  
The splendours and the voices of the world!  
And we, the poor earth's dying race, and yet  
No phantoms, watching from a phantom shore  
Await the last and largest sense to make  
The phantom walls of this illusion fade,  
And show us that the world is wholly fair.

"But vain the tears for darken'd years  
As laughter over wine,  
And vain the laughter as the tears,  
O brother, mine or thine,

For all that laugh, and all that weep,  
And all that breathe are one



Slight ripple on the boundless deep  
That moves, and all is gone."

But that one ripple on the boundless deep  
Feels that the deep is boundless, and itself  
For ever changing form, but evermore  
One with the boundless motion of the deep.

"Yet wine and laughter friends! and set  
The lamps alight, and call  
For golden music, and forget  
The darkness of the pall."

If utter darkness closed the day, my son——  
But earth's dark forehead flings athwart the heavens  
Her shadow crown'd with stars—and yonder—out  
To northward—some that never set, but pass  
From sight and night to lose themselves in day.  
I hate the black negation of the bier,  
And wish the dead, as happier than ourselves  
And higher, having climb'd one step beyond  
Our village miseries, might be borne in white  
To burial or to burning, hymn'd from hence  
With songs in praise of death, and crown'd with  
flowers!

"O worms and maggots of to-day  
Without their hope of wings!"

But louder than thy rhyme the silent Word  
Of that world-prophet in the heart of man.

“Tho’ some have gleams or so they say  
Of more than mortal things.”

To-day? but what of yesterday? for oft  
On me, when boy, there came what then I call’d,  
Who knew no books and no philosophies,  
In my boy-phrase ‘The Passion of the Past.’  
The first gray streak of earliest summer-dawn,  
The last long stripe of waning crimson gloom,  
As if the late and early were but one—  
A height, a broken grange, a grove, a flower  
Had murmurs ‘Lost and gone and lost and gone!’  
A breath, a whisper—some divine farewell—  
Desolate sweetness—far and far away—  
What had he loved, what had he lost, the boy?  
I know not and I speak of what has been.

And more, my son! for more than once when I  
Sat all alone, revolving in myself  
The word that is the symbol of myself,  
The mortal limit of the Self was loosed,  
And past into the Nameless, as a cloud  
Melts into Heaven. I touch’d my limbs, the limbs  
Were strange not mine—and yet no shade of doubt,  
But utter clearness, and thro’ loss of Self

The gain of such large life as match'd with ours  
Were Sun to spark—unshadowable in words,  
Themselves but shadows of a shadow-world.

“And idle gleams will come and go,  
But still the clouds remain;”

The clouds themselves are children of the Sun.

“And Night and Shadow rule below  
When only Day should reign.”

And Day and Night are children of the Sun,  
And idle gleams to thee are light to me.  
Some say, the Light was father of the Night,  
And some, the Night was father of the Light.  
No night no day!—I touch thy world again—  
No ill no good! such counter-terms, my son,  
Are border-races, holding, each its own  
By endless war: but night enough is there  
In yon dark city: get thee back: and since  
The key to that weird casket, which for thee  
But holds a skull, is neither thine nor mine,  
But in the hand of what is more than man,  
Or in man's hand when man is more than man,  
Let be thy wail and help thy fellow men,  
And make thy gold thy vassal not thy king,  
And fling free alms into the beggar's bowl,

And send the day into the darken'd heart ;  
Nor list for guerdon in the voice of men,  
A dying echo from a falling wall ;  
Nor care—for Hunger hath the Evil eye—  
To vex the noon with fiery gems, or fold  
Thy presence in the silk of sumptuous looms ;  
Nor roll thy viands on a luscious tongue,  
Nor drown thyself with flies in honied wine ;  
Nor thou be rageful, like a handled bee,  
And lose thy life by usage of thy sting ;  
Nor harm an adder thro' the lust for harm,  
Nor make a snail's horn shrink for wantonness ;  
And more—think well ! Do-well will follow thought,  
And in the fatal sequence of this world  
An evil thought may soil thy children's blood ;  
But curb the beast would cast thee in the mire,  
And leave the hot swamp of voluptuousness  
A cloud between the Nameless and thyself,  
And lay thine uphill shoulder to the wheel,  
And climb the Mount of Blessing, whence, if thou  
Look higher, then—perchance—thou mayest—beyond  
A hundred ever-rising mountain lines,  
And past the range of Night and Shadow—see  
The high-heaven dawn of more than mortal day  
Strike on the Mount of Vision !

So, farewell.

## THE FLIGHT.

### I.

ARE you sleeping? have you forgotten? do not sleep,  
my sister dear!

How *can* you sleep? the morning brings the day I  
hate and fear;

The cock has crow'd already once, he crows before  
his time;

Awake! the creeping glimmer steals, the hills are  
white with rime.

### II.

Ah, clasp me in your arms, sister, ah, fold me to your  
breast!

Ah, let me weep my fill once more, and cry myself to  
rest!

To rest? to rest and wake no more were better rest  
for me,

Than to waken every morning to that face I loathe to  
see:

## III.

I envied your sweet slumber, all night so calm you  
lay,  
The night was calm, the morn is calm, and like another  
day ;  
But I could wish yon moaning sea would rise and  
burst the shore,  
And such a whirlwind blow these woods, as never  
blew before.

## IV.

For, one by one, the stars went down across the  
gleaming pane,  
And project after project rose, and all of them were  
vain ;  
The blackthorn-blossom fades and falls and leaves the  
bitter sloe,  
The hope I catch at vanishes and youth is turn'd to  
woe.

## V.

Come, speak a little comfort ! all night I pray'd with  
tears,  
And yet no comfort came to me, and now the morn  
appears,

When he will tear me from your side, who bought  
me for his slave :

This father pays his debt with me, and weds me to  
my grave.

## VI.

What father, this or mine, was he, who, on that sum-  
mer day

When I had fall'n from off the crag we clamber'd up  
in play,

Found, fear'd me dead, and groan'd, and took and  
kiss'd me, and again

He kiss'd me ; and I loved him then ; he *was* my  
father then.

## VII.

No father now, the tyrant vassal of a tyrant vice !

The Godless Jephtha vows his child . . . to one cast  
of the dice.

These ancient woods, this Hall at last will go—perhaps  
have gone,

Except his own meek daughter yield her life, heart,  
soul to one—

## VIII.

To one who knows I scorn him. O the formal mock-  
ing bow,

The cruel smile, the courtly phrase that masks his  
malice now—

But often in the sidelong eyes a gleam of all things  
ill—

It is not Love but Hate that weds a bride against her  
will ;

## IX.

Hate, that would pluck from this true breast the  
locket that I wear,

The precious crystal into which I braided Edwin's  
hair !

The love that keeps this heart alive beats on it night  
and day—

One golden curl, his golden gift, before he past away.

## X.

He left us weeping in the woods ; his boat was on  
the sand ;

How slowly down the rocks he went, how loth to quit  
the land !

And all my life was darken'd, as I saw the white sail  
run,

And darken, up that lane of light into the setting  
sun.



## XI.

How often have we watch'd the sun fade from us  
thro' the West,  
And follow Edwin to those isles, those islands of the  
Blest !  
Is *he* not there ? would I were there, the friend, the  
bride, the wife,  
With him, where summer never dies, with Love, the  
Sun of life !

## XII.

O would I were in Edwin's arms—once more—to feel  
his breath  
Upon my cheek—on Edwin's ship, with Edwin, ev'n  
in death,  
Tho' all about the shuddering wreck the death-white  
sea should rave,  
Or if lip were laid to lip on the pillows of the wave.

## XIII.

Shall I take *him* ? I kneel with *him* ? I swear and  
swear forsworn  
To love him most, whom most I loathe, to honour  
whom I scorn ?

The Fiend would yell, the grave would yawn, my  
mother's ghost would rise—  
To lie, to lie—in God's own house—the blackest of  
all lies !

## XIV.

Why—rather than that hand in mine, tho' every pulse  
would freeze,  
I'd sooner fold an icy corpse dead of some foul  
disease :  
Wed him? I will not wed him, let them spurn me  
from the doors,  
And I will wander till I die about the barren moors.

## XV.

The dear, mad bride who stabb'd her bridegroom on  
her bridal night—  
If mad, then I am mad, but sane, if she were in the  
right.  
My father's madness makes me mad—but words are  
only words !  
I am not mad, not yet, not quite—There ! listen how  
the birds

## XVI.

Begin to warble yonder in the budding orchard  
trees !

The lark has past from earth to Heaven upon the  
morning breeze !

How gladly, were I one of those, how early would I  
wake !

And yet the sorrow that I bear is sorrow for *his* sake.

## XVII.

They love their mates, to whom they sing ; or else  
their songs, that meet

The morning with such music, would never be so  
sweet !

And tho' these fathers will not hear, the blessed  
Heavens are just,

And Love is fire, and burns the feet would trample it  
to dust.

## XVIII.

A door was open'd in the house—who? who? my  
father sleeps !

A stealthy foot upon the stair ! he—some one—this  
way creeps !

If he? yes, he . . . lurks, listens, fears his victim  
may have fled—

He ! where is some sharp-pointed thing? he comes,  
and finds me dead.

## XIX.

Not he, not yet ! and time to act---but how my temples  
burn !

And idle fancies flutter me, I know not where to turn ;  
Speak to me, sister ; counsel me ; this marriage must  
not be.

You only know the love that makes the world a world  
to me !

## XX.

Our gentle mother, had *she* lived—but we were left  
alone :

That other left us to ourselves ; he cared not for his  
own ;

So all the summer long we roam'd in these wild woods  
of ours,

My Edwin loved to call us then ‘ His two wild wood-  
land flowers.’

## XXI.

Wild flowers blowing side by side in God’s free light  
and air,

Wild flowers of the secret woods, when Edwin found  
us there,

Wild woods in which we roved with him, and heard  
his passionate vow,

Wild woods in which we rove no more, if we be parted  
now !

## XXII.

You will not leave me thus in grief to wander forth  
forlorn ;  
We never changed a bitter word, not once since we  
were born ;  
Our dying mother join'd our hands ; she knew this  
father well ;  
She bad us love, like souls in Heaven, and now I fly  
from Hell,

## XXIII.

And you with me ; and we shall light upon some  
lonely shore,  
Some lodge within the waste sea-dunes, and hear the  
waters roar,  
And see the ships from out the West go dipping thro'  
the foam,  
And sunshine on that sail at last which brings our  
Edwin home.

## XXIV.

But look, the morning grows apace, and lights the  
old church-tower,  
And lights the clock ! the hand points five—O me—  
it strikes the hour—

I bide no more, I meet my fate, whatever ills betide !  
Arise, my own true sister, come forth ! the world is  
wide.

## XXV.

And yet my heart is ill at ease, my eyes are dim with  
dew,  
I seem to see a new-dug grave up yonder by the yew !  
If we should never more return, but wander hand in  
hand  
With breaking hearts, without a friend, and in a  
distant land.

## XXVI.

O sweet, they tell me that the world is hard, and  
harsh of mind,  
But can it be so hard, so harsh, as those that should  
be kind ?  
That matters not : let come what will ; at last the end  
is sure,  
And every heart that loves with truth is equal to  
endure.

## TOMORROW.

### I.

HER, that yer Honour was spakin' to? Whin, yer Honour? last year—

Standin' here be the bridge, when last yer Honour was here?

An' yer Honour ye gev her the top of the mornin',  
'Tomorra' says she.

What did they call her, yer Honour? They call'd her Molly Magee.

An' yer Honour's the throe ould blood that always manes to be kind,

But there's rason in all things, yer Honour, for Molly was out of her mind.

### II.

Shure, an' meself remimbers wan night comin' down  
be the sthrame,

An' it seems to me now like a bit of yisther-day in a  
dhrame—

Here where yer Honour seen her—there was but a  
slip of a moon,

But I hard thim—Molly Magee wid her batchelor,  
Danny O'Roon—

'You've been takin' a dhrop o' the crathur' an' Danny  
says 'Troth, an' I been

Dhrinkin' yer health wid Shamus O'Shea at Katty's  
shebeen;<sup>1</sup>

But I must be lavin' ye soon.' 'Ochone are ye goin'  
away?'

'Goin' to cut the Sassenach whate' he says 'over the  
say'—

'An' whin will ye meet me agin?' an' I hard him  
'Molly asthore,

I'll meet you agin tomorra,' says he, 'be the chapel-  
door.'

'An' whin are ye goin' to lave me?' 'O' Monday  
mornin'' says he;

'An' shure thin ye'll meet me to-morra?' 'Tomorra,  
tomorra, Machree!'

Thin Molly's ould mother, yer Honour, that had no  
likin' for Dan,

Call'd from her cabin an' tould her to come away  
from the man,

<sup>1</sup> Grog-shop.



An' Molly Magee kem flyin' across me, as light as a lark,

An' Dan stood there for a minute, an' thin wint into the dark.

But wirrah! the storm that night—the tundher, an' rain that fell,

An' the sthrames runnin' down at the back o' the glin 'ud 'a dhrownded Hell.

## III.

But airth was at pace nixt mornin', an' Hiven in its glory smiled,

As the Holy Mother o' Glory that smiles at her sleepin' child—

Ethen—she stept an the chapel-green, an' she turn'd herself roun'

Wid a diamond dhrop in her eye, for Danny was not to be foun',

An' many's the time that I watch'd her at mass lettin' down the tear,

For the Divil a Danny was there, yer Honour, for forty year.

## IV.

Och, Molly Magee, wid the red o' the rose an' the white o' the May,

An' yer hair as black as the night, an' yer eyes as  
bright as the day !  
Achora, yer laste little whishper was sweet as the lilt  
of a bird !  
Acushla, ye set me heart batin' to music wid ivery  
word !  
An' sorra the Queen wid her sceptre in sich an illigant  
han',  
An' the fall of yer foot in the dance was as light as  
snow an the lan',  
An' the sun kem out of a cloud whiniver ye walkt in  
the shtreet,  
An' Shamus O'Shea was yer shadda, an' laid himself  
undher yer feet,  
An' I loved ye meself wid a heart and a half, me  
darlin', and he  
'Ud 'a shot his own sowl dead for a kiss of ye, Molly  
Magee.

## v.

But shure we wor betther frinds whin I crack'd his  
skull for her sake,  
An' he ped me back wid the best he could give at  
ould Donovan's wake—  
For the boys wor about her agin whin Dan didn't  
come to the fore,

An' Shamus along wid the rest, but she put thim all  
to the door.

An', afther, I thried her meself av the bird 'ud come  
to me call,

But Molly, begorrah, 'ud listhen to naither at all, at  
all.

## VI.

An' her nabours an' frinds 'ud consowl an' condowl  
wid her, airy and late,

'Your Danny,' they says, 'niver crasst over say to the  
Sassenach whate ;

He's gone to the States, aroon, an' he's married  
another wife,

An' ye'll niver set eyes an the face of the thraithur  
agin in life !

An' to dhrame of a married man, death alive, is a  
mortal sin.'

But Molly says 'I'd his hand-promise, an' shure he'll  
meet me agin.'

## VII.

An' afther her paärints had inter'd glory, an' both in  
wan day,

She began to spake to herself, the crathur, an' whisper,  
an' say

‘Tomorra, Tomorra!’ an’ F’ather Molowny he tuk her  
in han’,  
‘Molly, you’re manin’,’ he says, ‘me dear, av I  
undherstan’,  
That ye’ll meet your paärints agin an’ yer Danny  
O’Roon afore God  
Wid his blessed Marthyrs an’ Saints;’ an’ she gev  
him a frindly nod,  
‘Tomorra, Tomorra,’ she says, an’ she didn’t intind to  
desave,  
But her wits wor dead, an’ her hair was as white as  
the snow an a grave.

## VIII.

Arrah now, here last month they wor diggin’ the bog,  
an’ they foun’  
Dhrownded in black bog-wather a corp lyin’ undher  
groun’.

## IX.

Yer Honour’s own agint, he says to me wanst, at  
Katty’s shebeen,  
‘The Divil take all the black lan’, for a blessin’ ’ud  
come wid the green!’  
An’ where ’ud the poor man, thin, cut his bit o’ turf  
for the fire?

But och! bad scran to the bogs whin they swallies  
the man intire!

An' sorra the bog that's in Hiven wid all the light an'  
the glow,

An' there's hate enough, shure, widout *thim* in the  
Divil's kitchen below.

## X.

Thim ould blind nagers in Agypt, I hard his River-  
ence say,

Could keep their haithen kings in the flesh for the  
Jidgemint day,

An', faix, be the piper o' Moses, they kep the cat an'  
the dog,

But it 'ud 'a been aisier work av they lived be an  
Irish bog.

## XI.

How-an-iver they laid this body they foun' an the  
grass

Be the chapel-door, an' the people 'ud see it that wint  
in to mass—

But a frish gination had riz, an' most of the ould  
was few,

An' I didn't know him meself, an' nōne of the parish  
knew.

## XII.

But Molly kem limpín' up wid her stick, she was  
lamed iv a knee,  
Thin a slip of a gossoon call'd, 'Div ye know him,  
Molly Magee?'  
An' she stood up strait as the Queen of the world—  
she lifted her head—  
'He said he would meet me tomorra!' an' dhropt  
down dead an the dead.

## XIII.

Och, Molly, we thought, machree, ye would start back  
agin into life,  
Whin we laid yez, aich be aich, at yer wake like  
husban' an' wife.  
Sorra the dhry eye thin but was wet for the frinds  
that was gone!  
Sorra the silent throat but we hard it cryin' 'Ochone!'  
An' Shamus O'Shea that has now ten childer, han-  
some an' tall,  
Him an' his childer wor keenin' as if he had lost thim  
all.

## XIV.

Thin his Riverence buried thim both in wan grave be  
the dead boor-tree,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Elder-tree.

The young man Danny O'Roon wid his ould woman,  
Molly Magee.

## XV.

May all the flowers o' Jeroosilim blossom an' spring  
from the grass,  
Imbrashin' an' kissin' aich other—as ye did—over yer  
Crass !  
An' the lark fly out o' the flowers wid his song to the  
Sun an' the Moon,  
An' tell thim in Hiven about Molly Magee an' her  
Danny O'Roon,  
Till Holy St. Pether gets up wid his kays an' opens  
the gate !  
An' shure, be the Crass, that's betther nor cuttin' the  
Sassenach whate  
To be there wid the Blessed Mother, an' Saints an'  
Marthyrs galore,  
An' singin' yer 'Aves' an' 'Pathers' for iver an' iver-  
more.

## XVI.

An' now that I tould yer Honour whativer I hard an'  
seen,  
Yer Honour 'ill give me a thrifle to dhrink yer health  
in potheen.

## THE SPINSTER'S SWEET-ARTS.

### I.

MILK for my sweet-arts, Bess ! fur it mun be the time  
about now

When Molly cooms in fro' the far-end close wi' her  
päails fro' the cow.

Eh ! tha be new to the plaäce—thou'rt gaäpin'—  
doesn't tha see

I calls 'em arter the fellers es once was sweet upo'  
me ?

### II.

Naäy to be sewer it be past 'er time. What maäkes  
'er sa lääte ?

Goä to the lääne at the back, an' looök thruf Maddi-  
son's gaäte !

### III.

Sweet-arts ! Molly belike may 'a lighted to-night upo'  
one.



Sweet-arts ! thanks to the Lord that I niver not listen'd  
to noän !

So I sits i' my oän armchair wi' my oän kettle theere  
o' the hob,

An' Tommy the fust, an' Tommy the second, an'  
Steevie an' Rob.

## IV.

Rob, coom oop 'ere o' my knee. Thou sees that i'  
spite o' the men

I 'a kep' thruf thick an' thin my two 'oonderd a-year to  
mysen ;

Yis ! thaw tha call'd me es pretty es ony lass i' the  
Shere ;

An' thou be es pretty a Tabby, but Robby I seed  
thruf ya theree.

## V.

Feyther 'ud saäy I wur ugly es sin, an' I beänt not  
vaäin,

But I niver wur downright hugly, thaw soom 'ud 'a  
thowt ma plaäin,

An' I wasn't sa plaäin i' pink ribbons, ye said I wur  
pretty i' pinks,

An' I liked to 'ear it I did, but I beänt sich a fool as  
ye thinks ;

Ye was stroäkin ma down wi' the 'air, as I be a-stroäkin  
o' you,  
But whiniver I loöök'd i' the glass I wur sewer that  
it couldn't be true ;  
Niver wur pretty, not I, but ye knaw'd it wur pleasant  
to 'ear,  
Thaw it warn't not me es wur pretty, but my two  
'oonderd a-year.

## VI.

D'ya mind the murnin' when we was a-walkin' togither,  
an' stood  
By the claäy'd-ooop pond, that the foälk be sa scared  
at, i' Gigglesby wood,  
Wheer the poor wench drowndid hersen, black Sal, es  
'ed been disgraäced ?  
An' I feel'd thy arm es I stood wur a-creeäpin about  
my waäist ;  
An' me es wur allus afear'd of a man's gittin' ower  
fond,  
I sidled awaäy an' awaäy till I plumpt foot fust i' the  
pond ;  
And, Robby, I niver 'a liked tha sa well, as I did  
that daäy,  
Fur tha joompt in thysen, an' tha hoickt my feet wi' a  
flop fro' the claäy.

Ay, stick oop thy back, an' set oop thy taäil, tha may  
gie ma a kiss,  
Fur I walk'd wi' tha all the way hoam an' wur niver sa  
nigh saäyin' Yis.  
But wa boäth was i' sich a clat we was shaämed to  
cross Gigglesby Greeän,  
Fur a cat may looök at a king thou knaws but the cat  
mun be cleän.  
Sa we boäth on us kep out o' sight o' the winders o'  
Gigglesby Hinn—  
Naäy, but the claws o' tha ! quiet ! they pricks cleän  
thruf to the skin—  
An' wa boäth slinkt 'oäm by the brokken shed i' the  
lääne at the back,  
Wheer the poodle runn'd at tha once, an' thou runn'd  
oop o' the thack ;  
An' tha squee'dg'd my 'and i' the shed, fur theere we  
was forced to 'ide,  
Fur I seed that Steevie wur coomin', and one o' the  
Tommies beside.

## VII.

Theere now, what art'a mewin at, Steevie ? for owt I  
can tell—  
Robby wur fust to be sewer, or I mowt 'a liked tha as  
well.

## VIII.

But, Robby, I thowt o' tha all the while I wur chaängin'  
my gown,

An' I thowt shall I chaänge my staäte? but, O Lord,  
upo' coomin' down—

My bran-new carpet es fresh es a midder o' flowers i'  
Maäy—

Why 'edn't tha wiped thy shoes? it wur clatted all  
ower wi' claäy.

An' I could 'a cried ammost, fur I seed that it couldn't  
be,

An' Robby I gied tha a raätin that sattled thy coortin  
o' me.

An' Molly an' me was agreed, as we was a-cleänin' the  
floor,

That a man be a durty thing an' a trouble an' plague  
wi' indoor.

But I rued it arter a bit, fur I stuck to tha moor na  
the rest,

But I couldn't 'a lived wi' a man an' I knaws it be all  
fur the best.

## IX.

Naäy—let ma stroäk tha down till I maäkes tha es  
smooth es silk,

But if I 'ed married tha, Robby, thou'd not 'a been  
worth thy milk,

Thou'd niver 'a cotch'd ony mice but 'a left me the  
work to do,  
And 'a taäen to the bottle beside, so es all that I 'ears  
be true ;  
But I loovs tha to maäke thysen 'appy, an' soa purr  
awaäy, my dear,  
Thou 'ed wellnigh purr'd ma awaäy fro' my oän two  
'oonderd a-year.

## X.

Sweärin agean, you Toms, as ye used to do twelve  
year sin' !  
Ye niver 'eärd Steevie sweär 'cep' it wur at a dog  
coomin' in,  
An' boath o' ye mun be fools to be hallus a-shawin'  
your claws,  
Fur I niver cared nothink for neither—an' one o' ye  
deäd ye knaws !  
Coom give hoäver then, weant ye? I warrant ye  
soom fine daäy—  
There, lig down—I shall hev to gie one or tother  
awaäy.  
Can't ye taäke pattern by Steevie? ye shant hev a  
drop fro' the paäil.  
Steevie be right good manners bang thruf to the tip o'  
the taäil.

## XI.

Robby, git down wi'tha, wilt tha? let Steevie coom  
oop o' my knee.  
Steevie, my lad, thou 'ed very nigh been the Steevie  
fur me!  
Robby wur fust to be sewer, 'e wur burn an' bred i'  
the 'ouse,  
But thou be es 'ansom a tabby es iver patted a mouse.

## XII.

An' I beänt not vaäin, but I knaws I 'ed led tha a  
quieter life  
Nor her wi' the hepitaph yonder! "A faäithful an'  
loovin' wife!"  
An' 'cos o' thy farm by the beck, an' thy windmill oop  
o' the croft,  
Tha thowt tha would marry ma, did tha? but that  
wur a bit ower soft,  
'Thaw thou was es soäber es daäy, wi' a niced red  
faäce, an' es cleän  
Es a shillin' fresh fro' the mint wi' a bran-new 'eäd o'  
the Queeän,  
An' thy farmin' es cleän es thysen, fur, Steevie, tha  
kep' it sa neät  
That I niver not spied sa much es a poppy along wi'  
the wheät,

An' the wool of a thistle a-flyin' an' secädin' tha haäted  
to see ;

'Twur es bad es a battle-twigg<sup>1</sup> 'ere i' my oän blue  
chaumber to me.

Ay, roob thy whiskers ageän ma, fur I could 'a taäen  
to tha well,

But fur thy bairns, poor Steevie, a bouncin' boy an' a  
gell.

## XIII.

An' thou was es fond o' thy bairns es I be mysen o'  
my cats,

But I niver not wish'd fur childer, I hevn't naw likin'  
fur brats ;

Pretty anew when ya dresses 'em oop, an' they goäs  
fur a walk,

Or sits wi' their 'ands afoor 'em, an' doesn't not 'inder  
the talk !

But their bottles o' pap, an' their mucky bibs, an' the  
clats an' the clouts,

An' their mashin' their toys to pieäces an' maäkin' ma  
deäf wi' their shouts,

An' hallus a-joompin' about ma as if they was set upo'  
springs,

An' a haxin' ma hawkard questions, an' saäyin'  
ondecent things,

<sup>1</sup> Earwig.

An' a-callin' ma 'hugly' mayhap to my faäce, or a  
teärin' my gown—

Dear! dear! dear! I mun part them Tommies—  
Steevie git down.

## XIV.

Ye be wuss nor the men-tommies, you. I tell'd ya,  
na moor o' that!

Tom, lig theere o' the cushion, an' tother Tom 'ere o'  
the mat.

## XV.

Theere! I ha' master'd *them!* Hed I married the  
Tommies—O Lord,

To loove an' obaäy the Tommies! I couldn't 'a stuck  
by my word.

To be horder'd about, an' waäked, when Molly 'd put  
out the light,

By a man coomin' in wi' a hiccup at ony hour o' the  
night!

An' the taäble staäin'd wi' 'is aäle, an' the mud o' 'is  
boots o' the stairs,

An' the stink o' 'is pipe i' the 'ouse, an' the mark o'  
'is 'eäd o' the chairs!

An' noän o' my four sweet-arts 'ud 'a let me 'a hed  
my oän waäy,



Sa I likes 'em best wi' taäils when they 'evn't a word  
to saäy.

## XVI.

An' I sits i' my oän little parlour, an' sarved by my  
oän little lass,  
Wi' my oän little garden outside, an' my oän bed o'  
sparrow-grass,  
An' my oän door-poorch wi' the woodbine an' jessmine  
a-dressin' it greeän,  
An' my oän fine Jackman i' purple a roäbin' the 'ouse  
like a Queeän.

## XVII.

An' the little gells bobs to ma hoffens es I be abroad  
i' the läänes,  
When I goäs fur to coomfut the poor es be down wi'  
their haäches an' their pääins :  
An' a haäf-pot o' jam, or a mossel o' meät when it  
beänt too dear,  
They maäkes ma a graäter Laädy nor 'er i' the mansion  
theer,  
Hes 'es hallus to hax of a man how much to spare or  
to spend ;  
An' a spinster I be an' I will be, if soä pleäse God, to  
the hend.

## XVIII.

Mew ! mew !—Bess wi' the milk ! what ha maäde our  
Molly sa lääte ?

It should 'a been 'ere by seven, an' theere—it be  
strikin' height—

'Cushie wur craäzed fur 'er cauf' well—I 'eärd 'er a  
maäkin' 'er moän,

An' I thowt to mysen 'thank God that I hevn't naw  
cauf o' my oän.'

Theere !

Set it down !

Now Robby !

You Tommies shall waäit to-night  
Till Robby an' Steevie 'es 'ed their lap—an' it sarves  
ye right.

## LOCKSLEY HALL

### SIXTY YEARS AFTER.

LATE, my grandson ! half the morning have I paced  
these sandy tracts,  
Watch'd again the hollow ridges roaring into cataracts,

Wander'd back to living boyhood while I heard the  
curlews call,  
I myself so close on death, and death itself in Locksley  
Hall.

So—your happy suit was blasted—she the faultless, the  
divine ;  
And you liken -boyish babble—this boy-love of yours  
with mine.

I myself have often babbled doubtless of a foolish past ;  
Babble, babble ; our old England may go down in  
babble at last.

‘Curse him !’ curse your fellow-victim ? call him dotard  
in your rage ?

Eyes that lured a doting boyhood well might fool a  
dotard’s age.

Jilted for a wealthier ! wealthier ? yet perhaps she was  
not wise ;

I remember how you kiss’d the miniature with those  
sweet eyes.

In the hall there hangs a painting—Amy’s arms about  
my neck—

Happy children in a sunbeam sitting on the ribs of  
wreck.

In my life there was a picture, she that clasp’d my neck  
had flown ;

I was left within the shadow sitting on the wreck alone.

Yours has been a slighter ailment, will you sicken for  
her sake ?

You, not you ! your modern amourist is of easier,  
earthlier make.

Amy loved me, Amy fail’d me, Amy was a timid child ;  
But your Judith—but your worldling—*she* had never  
driven me wild.

She that holds the diamond necklace dearer than the  
golden ring,  
She that finds a winter sunset fairer than a morn of  
Spring.

She that in her heart is brooding on his briefer lease  
of life,  
While she vows 'till death shall part us,' she the would-  
be-widow wife.

She the worldling born of worldlings—father, mother—  
be content,  
Ev'n the homely farm can teach us there is something  
in descent.

Yonder in that chapel, slowly sinking now into the  
ground,  
Lies the warrior, my forefather, with his feet upon the  
hound.

Cross'd ! for once he sail'd the sea to crush the Moslem  
in his pride ;  
Dead the warrior, dead his glory, dead the cause in  
which he died.

Yet how often I and Amy in the mouldering aisle have  
stood,

Gazing for one pensive moment on that founder of our  
blood.

There again I stood to-day, and where of old we knelt  
in prayer,  
Close beneath the casement crimson with the shield of  
Locksley—there,

All in white Italian marble, looking still as if she  
smiled,  
Lies my Amy dead in child-birth, dead the mother,  
dead the child.

Dead—and sixty years ago, and dead her aged husband  
now—  
I this old white-headed dreamer stoopt and kiss'd her  
marble brow.

Gone the fires of youth, the follies, furies, curses,  
passionate tears,  
Gone like fires and floods and earthquakes of the  
planet's dawning years.

Fires that shook me once, but now to silent ashes fall'n  
away.  
Cold upon the dead volcano sleeps the gleam of dying  
day.

Gone the tyrant of my youth, and mute below the  
chancel stones,  
All his virtues—I forgive them—black in white above  
his bones.

Gone the comrades of my bivouac, some in fight  
against the foe,  
Some thro' age and slow diseases, gone as all on earth  
will go.

Gone with whom for forty years my life in golden  
sequence ran,  
She with all the charm of woman, she with all the  
breadth of man,

Strong in will and rich in wisdom, Edith, yet so lowly-  
sweet,  
Woman to her inmost heart, and woman to her tender  
feet,

Very woman of very woman, nurse of ailing body and  
mind,  
She that link'd again the broken chain that bound me  
to my kind.

Here to-day was Amy with me, while I wander'd down  
the coast,

Near us Edith's holy shadow, smiling at the slighter  
ghost.

Gone our sailor son thy father, Leonard early lost at  
sea ;

Thou alone, my boy, of Amy's kin and mine art left  
to me.

Gone thy tender-natured mother, wearying to be left  
alone,

Pining for the stronger heart that once had beat beside  
her own.

Truth, for Truth is Truth, he worshipt, being true as  
he was brave ;

Good, for Good is Good, he follow'd, yet he look'd  
beyond the grave,

Wiser there than you, that crowning barren Death as  
lord of all,

Deem this over-tragic drama's closing curtain is the  
pall !

Beautiful was death in him, who saw the death, but  
kept the deck,

Saving women and their babes, and sinking with the  
sinking wreck,



Gone for ever ! Ever ? no—for since our dying race  
began,

Ever, ever, and for ever was the leading light of man.

Those that in barbarian burials kill'd the slave, and  
slew the wife,

Felt within themselves the sacred passion of the second  
life.

Indian warriors dream of ampler hunting grounds  
beyond the night ;

Ev'n the black Australian dying hopes he shall return,  
a white.

Truth for truth, and good for good ! The Good, the  
True, the Pure, the Just—

Take the charm 'For ever' from them, and they  
crumble into dust.

Gone the cry of 'Forward, Forward,' lost within a  
growing gloom ;

Lost, or only heard in silence from the silence of a  
tomb.

Half the marvels of my morning, triumphs over time  
and space,

Staled by frequency, shrunk by usage into commonest  
commonplace !

‘Forward’ rang the voices then, and of the many mine  
was one.

Let us hush this cry of ‘Forward’ till ten thousand  
years have gone.

Far among the vanish’d races, old Assyrian kings would  
flay

Captives whom they caught in battle—iron-hearted  
victors they.

Ages after, while in Asia, he that led the wild Moguls,  
Timur built his ghastly tower of eighty thousand human  
skulls,

Then, and here in Edward’s time, an age of noblest  
English names,

Christian conquerors took and flung the conquer’d  
Christian into flames.

Love your enemy, bless your haters, said the Greatest  
of the great ;

Christian love among the Churches look’d the twin of  
heathen hate.

From the golden alms of Blessing man had coin’d  
himself a curse :

Rome of Cæsar, Rome of Peter, which was crueller ?  
which was worse ?

France had shown a light to all men, preach'd a Gospel,  
all men's good ;

Celtic Demos rose a Demon, shriek'd and slaked the  
light with blood.

Hope was ever on her mountain, watching till the day  
begun—

Crown'd with sunlight—over darkness—from the still  
unrisen sun.

Have we grown at last beyond the passions of the  
primal clan ?

' Kill your enemy, for you hate him,' still, ' your enemy '  
was a man.

Have we sunk below them ? peasants maim the helpless  
horse, and drive

Innocent cattle under thatch, and burn the kindlier  
brutes alive.

Brutes, the brutes are not your wrongers—burnt at  
midnight, found at morn,

Twisted hard in mortal agony with their offspring, born-  
unborn,

Clinging to the silent mother ! Are we devils ? are we  
men ?

Sweet St. Francis of Assisi, would that he were here  
again,

He that in his Catholic wholeness used to call the very  
flowers

Sisters, brothers—and the beasts—whose pains are  
hardly less than ours !

Chaos, Cosmos ! Cosmos, Chaos ! who can tell how  
all will end ?

Read the wide world's annals, you, and take their  
wisdom for your friend.

Hope the best, but hold the Present fatal daughter of  
the Past,

Shape your heart to front the hour, but dream not that  
the hour will last.

Ay, if dynamite and revolver leave you courage to be  
wise :

When was age so cramm'd with menace ? madness ?  
written, spoken lies ?

Envy wears the mask of Love, and, laughing sober  
fact to scorn,

Cries to Weakest as to Strongest, 'Ye are equals,  
equal-born.'

Equal-born? O yes, if yonder hill be level with the  
flat.

Charm us, Orator, till the Lion look no larger than the  
Cat,

Till the Cat thro' that mirage of overheated language  
loom

Larger than the Lion,—Demos end in working its own  
doom.

Russia bursts our Indian barrier, shall we fight her?  
shall we yield?

Pause! before you sound the trumpet, hear the voices  
from the field.

Those three hundred millions under one Imperial  
sceptre now,

Shall we hold them? shall we loose them? take the  
suffrage of the plow.

Nay, but these would feel and follow Truth if only you  
and you,

Rivals of realm-ruining party, when you speak were  
wholly true.

Plowmen, Shepherds, have I found, and more than  
once, and still could find,

Sons of God, and kings of men in utter nobleness of  
mind,

Truthful, trustful, looking upward to the practised  
hustings-liar ;  
So the Higher wields the Lower, while the Lower is  
the Higher.

Here and there a cotter's babe is royal-born by right  
divine ;  
Here and there my lord is lower than his oxen or his  
swine.

Chaos, Cosmos ! Cosmos, Chaos ! once again the  
sickening game ;  
Freedom, free to slay herself, and dying while they  
shout her name.

Step by step we gain'd a freedom known to Europe,  
known to all ;  
Step by step we rose to greatness,—thro' the tongue-  
sters we may fall.

You that woo the Voices—tell them 'old experience  
is a fool,'  
'Teach your flatter'd kings that only those who cannot  
read can rule.

Pluck the mighty from their seat, but set no meek ones  
in their place ;

Pillory Wisdom in your markets, pelt your offal at her  
face.

Tumble Nature heel o'er head, and, yelling with the  
yelling street,

Set the feet above the brain and swear the brain is in  
the feet.

Bring the old dark ages back without the faith, without  
the hope,

Break the State, the Church, the Throne, and roll their  
ruins down the slope.

Authors—essayist, atheist, novelist, realist, rhymester,  
play your part,

Paint the mortal shame of nature with the living hues  
of Art.

Rip your brothers' vices open, strip your own foul  
passions bare ;

Down with Reticence, down with Reverence—forward  
—naked—let them stare.

Feed the budding rose of boyhood with the drainage  
of your sewer ;

Send the drain into the fountain, lest the stream should  
issue pure.

Set the maiden fancies wallowing in the troughs of  
Zolaism,—  
Forward, forward, ay and backward, downward too  
into the abysm.

Do your best to charm the worst, to lower the rising  
race of men ;  
Have we risen from out the beast, then back into the  
beast again ?

Only 'dust to dust' for me that sicken at your lawless  
din,  
Dust in wholesome old-world dust before the newer  
world begin.

Heated am I ? you—you wonder—well, it scarce be-  
comes mine age—  
Patience ! let the dying actor mouth his last upon the  
stage.

Cries of unprogressive dotage ere the dotard fall  
asleep ?  
Noises of a current narrowing, not the music of a  
deep ?



Ay, for doubtless I am old, and think gray thoughts,  
for I am gray :

After all the stormy changes shall we find a changeless  
May ?

After madness, after massacre, Jacobinism and Jac-  
querie,

Some diviner force to guide us thro' the days I shall  
not see ?

When the schemes and all the systems, Kingdoms and  
Republics fall,

Something kindlier, higher, holier—all for each and  
each for all ?

All the full-brain, half-brain races, led by Justice, Love,  
and Truth ;

All the millions one at length with all the visions of  
my youth ?

All diseases quench'd by Science, no man halt, or deaf  
or blind ;

Stronger ever born of weaker, lustier body, larger mind ?

Earth at last a warless world, a single race, a single  
tongue—

I have seen her far away—for is not Earth as yet so  
young ?—

Every tiger madness muzzled, every serpent passion  
kill'd,

Every grim ravine a garden, every blazing desert till'd,

Robed in universal harvest up to either pole she  
smiles,

Universal ocean softly washing all her warless Isles.

Warless? when her tens are thousands, and her thou-  
sands millions, then—

All her harvest all too narrow—who can fancy warless  
men?

Warless? war will die out late then. Will it ever? late  
or soon?

Can it, till this outworn earth be dead as yon dead  
world the moon?

Dead the new astronomy calls her. . . . On this day  
and at this hour,

In this gap between the sandhills, whence you see the  
Locksley tower,

Here we met, our latest meeting—Amy—sixty years  
ago—

She and I—the moon was falling greenish thro' a rosy  
glow,

Just above the gateway tower, and even where you see  
her now—

Here we stood and claspt each other, swore the seem-  
ing-deathless vow. . . .

Dead, but how her living glory lights the hall, the dune,  
the grass !

Yet the moonlight is the sunlight, and the sun himself  
will pass.

Venus near her ! smiling downward at this earthlier  
earth of ours,

Closer on the Sun, perhaps a world of never fading  
flowers.

Hesper, whom the poet call'd the Bringer home of all  
good things.

All good things may move in Hesper, perfect peoples,  
perfect kings.

Hesper—Venus—were we native to that splendour or  
in Mars,

We should see the Globe we groan in, fairest of their  
evening stars.

Could we dream of wars and carnage, craft and mad-  
ness, lust and spite,

Roaring London, raving Paris, in that point of peaceful  
light?

Might we not in glancing heavenward on a star so  
silver-fair,  
Yearn, and clasp the hands and murmur, 'Would to  
God that we were there'?

Forward, backward, backward, forward, in the im-  
measurable sea,  
Sway'd by vaster ebbs and flows than can be known to  
you or me.

All the suns—are these but symbols of innumerable  
man,  
Man or Mind that sees a shadow of the planner or the  
plan?

Is there evil but on earth? or pain in every peopled  
sphere?  
Well be grateful for the sounding watchword, 'Evolu-  
tion' here,

Evolution ever climbing after some ideal good,  
And Reversion ever dragging Evolution in the  
mud.

What are men that He should heed us? cried the king  
of sacred song ;

Insects of an hour, that hourly work their brother  
insect wrong,

While the silent Heavens roll, and Suns along their  
fiery way,

All their planets whirling round them, flash a million  
miles a day.

Many an Æon moulded earth before her highest, man,  
was born,

Many an Æon too may pass when earth is manless  
and forlorn,

Earth so huge, and yet so bounded—pools of salt, and  
plots of land—

Shallow skin of green and azure—chains of mountain,  
grains of sand !

Only That which made us, meant us to be mightier by  
and by,

Set the sphere of all the boundless Heavens within the  
human eye,

Sent the shadow of Himself, the boundless, thro' the  
human soul ;

Boundless inward, in the atom, boundless outward, in  
the Whole.

\* \* \* \* \*

Here is Locksley Hall, my grandson, here the lion-  
guarded gate.

Not to-night in Locksley Hall—to-morrow—you, you  
come so late.

Wreck'd—your train—or all but wreck'd? a shatter'd  
wheel? a vicious boy!

Good, this forward, you that preach it, is it well to wish  
you joy?

Is it well that while we range with Science, glorying in  
the Time,  
City children soak and blacken soul and sense in city  
slime?

There among the glooming alleys Progress halts on  
palsied feet,  
Crime and hunger cast our maidens by the thousand  
on the street

There the Master scrimps his haggard sempstress of  
her daily bread,

There a single sordid attic holds the living and the  
dead.

There the smouldering fire of fever creeps across the  
rotted floor,  
And the crowded couch of incest in the warrens of  
the poor.

Nay, your pardon, cry your 'forward,' yours are hope  
and youth, but I—

Eighty winters leave the dog too lame to follow with  
the cry,

Lame and old, and past his time, and passing now  
into the night ;

Yet I would the rising race were half as eager for the  
light.

Light the fading gleam of Even ? light the glimmer of  
the dawn ?

Aged eyes may take the growing glimmer for the  
gleam withdrawn.

Far away beyond her myriad coming changes earth  
will be

Something other than the wildest modern guess of  
you and me.

Earth may reach her earthly-worst, or if she gain her  
earthly-best,  
Would she find her human offspring this ideal man at  
rest?

Forward then, but still remember how the course of  
Time will swerve,  
Crook and turn upon itself in many a backward  
streaming curve.

Not the Hall to-night, my grandson! Death and  
Silence hold their own.  
Leave the Master in the first dark hour of his last  
sleep alone.

Worthier soul was he than I am, sound and honest,  
rustic Squire,  
Kindly landlord, boon companion—youthful jealousy  
is a liar.

Cast the poison from your bosom, oust the madness  
from your brain.  
Let the trampled serpent show you that you have not  
lived in vain.

Youthful! youth and age are scholars yet but in the  
lower school,



Nor is he the wisest man who never proved himself a  
fool.

Yonder lies our young sea-village—Art and Grace are  
less and less :

Science grows and Beauty dwindles—roofs of slated  
hideousness !

There is one old Hostel left us where they swing the  
Locksley shield,

Till the peasant cow shall butt the 'Lion passant'  
from his field.

Poor old Heraldry, poor old History, poor old Poetry,  
passing hence,

In the common deluge drowning old political common-  
sense !

Poor old voice of eighty crying after voices that have  
fled !

All I loved are vanish'd voices, all my steps are on  
the dead.

All the world is ghost to me, and as the phantom  
disappears,

Forward far and far from here is all the hope of eighty  
years.

\* \* \* \* \*

In this Hostel—I remember—I repent it o'er his  
grave—

Like a clown—by chance he met me—I refused the  
hand he gave.

From that casement where the trailer mantles all the  
mouldering bricks—

I was then in early boyhood, Edith but a child of  
six—

While I shelter'd in this archway from a day of  
driving showers—

Peept the winsome face of Edith like a flower among  
the flowers.

Here to-night! the Hall to-morrow, when they toll  
the Chapel bell!

Shall I hear in one dark room a wailing, 'I have  
loved thee well.'

Then a peal that shakes the portal—one has come to  
claim his bride,

Her that shrank, and put me from her, shriek'd, and  
started from my side—

Silent echoes ! You, my Leonard, use and not abuse  
your day,

Move among your people, know them, follow him  
who led the way,

Strove for sixty widow'd years to help his homelier  
brother men,

Served the poor, and built the cottage, raised the  
school, and drain'd the fen.

Hears he now the Voice that wrong'd him ? who shall  
swear it cannot be ?

Earth would never touch her worst, were one in fifty  
such as he.

Ere she gain her Heavenly-best, a God must mingle  
with the game :

Nay, there may be those about us whom we neither  
see nor name,

Felt within us as ourselves, the Powers of Good, the  
Powers of Ill,

Strowing balm, or shedding poison in the fountains of  
the Will.

Follow you the Star that lights a desert pathway,  
yours or mine.

Forward, till you see the highest Human Nature is  
divine.

Follow Light, and do the Right—for man can half-  
control his doom—  
Till you find the deathless Angel seated in the vacant  
tomb.

Forward, let the stormy moment fly and mingle with  
the Past.  
I that loathed, have come to love him. Love will  
conquer at the last.

Gone at eighty, mine own age, and I and you will  
bear the pall ;  
Then I leave thee Lord and Master, latest Lord of  
Locksley Hall.

## PROLOGUE

TO GENERAL HAMLEY.

OUR birches yellowing and from each  
The light leaf falling fast,  
While squirrels from our fiery beech  
Were bearing off the mast,  
You came, and look'd and loved the view  
Long-known and loved by me,  
Green Sussex fading into blue  
With one gray glimpse of sea ;  
And, gazing from this height alone,  
We spoke of what had been  
Most marvellous in the wars your own  
Crimean eyes had seen ;  
And now—like old-world inns that take  
Some warrior for a sign  
That therewithin a guest may make  
True cheer with honest wine—

Because you heard the lines I read  
Nor utter'd word of blame,  
I dare without your leave to head  
These rhymings with your name,  
Who know you but as one of those  
I fain would meet again,  
Yet know you, as your England knows  
That you and all your men  
Were soldiers to her heart's desire,  
When, in the vanish'd year,  
You saw the league-long rampart-fire  
Flare from Tel-el-Kebir  
'Thro' darkness, and the foe was driven,  
And Wolseley overthrew  
Arâbi, and the stars in heaven  
Paled, and the glory grew.

THE CHARGE OF THE HEAVY BRIGADE  
AT BALACLAVA.

OCTOBER 25, 1854.

I.

THE charge of the gallant three hundred, the Heavy  
Brigade !

Down the hill, down the hill, thousands of Russians,  
Thousands of horsemen, drew to the valley—and  
stay'd ;

For Scarlett and Scarlett's three hundred were riding  
by

When the points of the Russian lances arose in the  
sky ;

And he call'd ' Left wheel into line ! ' and they wheel'd  
and obey'd.

Then he look'd at the host that had halted he knew  
not why,

And he turn'd half round, and he bad his trumpeter  
sound

To the charge, and he rode on ahead, as he waved his  
     blade  
 To the gallant three hundred whose glory will never  
     die—  
 ‘Follow,’ and up the hill, up the hill, up the hill,  
 Follow’d the Heavy Brigade.

## II.

The trumpet, the gallop, the charge, and the might of  
     the fight !  
 Thousands of horsemen had gather’d there on the  
     height,  
 With a wing push’d out to the left, and a wing to the  
     right,  
 And who shall escape if they close? but he dash’d up  
     alone  
 Thro’ the great gray slope of men,  
 Sway’d his sabre, and held his own  
 Like an Englishman there and then ;  
 All in a moment follow’d with force  
 Three that were next in their fiery course,  
 Wedged themselves in between horse and horse,  
 Fought for their lives in the narrow gap they had  
     made—  
 Four amid thousands ! and up the hill, up the hill,  
 Gallopt the gallant three hundred, the Heavy Brigade.



## III.

Fell like a cannonshot,  
 Burst like a thunderbolt,  
 Crash'd like a hurricane,  
 Broke thro' the mass from below,  
 Drove thro' the midst of the foe,  
 Plunged up and down, to and fro,  
 Rode flashing blow upon blow,  
 Brave Inniskillens and Greys  
 Whirling their sabres in circles of light !  
 And some of us, all in amaze,  
 Who were held for a while from the fight,  
 And were only standing at gaze,  
 When the dark-muffled Russian crowd  
 Folded its wings from the left and the right,  
 And roll'd them around like a cloud,—  
 O mad for the charge and the battle were we,  
 When our own good redcoats sank from sight,  
 Like drops of blood in a dark-gray sea,  
 And we turn'd to each other, whispering, all dismay'd,  
 'Lost are the gallant three hundred of Scarlett's  
     Brigade !'

## IV.

'Lost one and all' were the words  
 Mutter'd in our dismay ;  
 But they rode like Victors and Lords

Thro' the forest of lances and swords  
 In the heart of the Russian hordes,  
 They rode, or they stood at bay—  
 Struck with the sword-hand and slew,  
 Down with the bridle-hand drew  
 The foe from the saddle and threw  
 Underfoot there in the fray—  
 Ranged like a storm or stood like a rock  
 In the wave of a stormy day ;  
 Till suddenly shock upon shock  
 Stagger'd the mass from without,  
 Drove it in wild disarray,  
 For our men gallopt up with a cheer and a shout,  
 And the foeman surged, and waver'd, and reel'd  
 Up the hill, up the hill, up the hill, out of the field,  
 And over the brow and away.

## v.

Glory to each and to all, and the charge that they  
 made !

Glory to all the three hundred, and all the Brigade !

NOTE.—The 'three hundred' of the 'Heavy Brigade' who made this famous charge were the Scots Greys and the 2nd squadron of Inniskillings; the remainder of the 'Heavy Brigade' subsequently dashing up to their support.

The 'three' were Scarlett's aide-de-camp, Elliot, and the trumpeter and Shogog the orderly, who had been close behind him.

## EPILOGUE.

IRENE.

NOT this way will you set your name  
A star among the stars.

POET.

What way?

IRENE.

You praise when you should blame  
The barbarism of wars.  
A juster epoch has begun.

POET.

Yet tho' this cheek be gray,  
And that bright hair the modern sun,  
Those eyes the blue to-day,  
You wrong me, passionate little friend.  
I would that wars should cease,

I would the globe from end to end  
    Might sow and reap in peace,  
And some new Spirit o'erbear the old,  
    Or Trade re-frain the Powers  
From war with kindly links of gold,  
    Or Love with wreaths of flowers.  
Slav, Teuton, Kelt, I count them all  
    My friends and brother souls,  
With all the peoples, great and small,  
    That wheel between the poles.  
But since, our mortal shadow, Ill  
    To waste this earth began—  
Perchance from some abuse of Will  
    In worlds before the man  
Involving ours—he needs must fight  
    To make true peace his own,  
He needs must combat might with might,  
    Or Might would rule alone ;  
And who loves War for War's own sake  
    Is fool, or crazed, or worse ;  
But let the patriot-soldier take  
    His meed of fame in verse ;  
Nay—tho' that realm were in the wrong  
    For which her warriors bleed,  
It still were right to crown with song  
    The warrior's noble deed—  
A crown the Singer hopes may last,

For so the deed endures ;  
But Song will vanish in the Vast ;  
And that large phrase of yours  
'A Star among the stars,' my dear,  
Is girlish talk at best ;  
For dare we dally with the sphere  
As he did half in jest,  
Old Horace? 'I will strike' said he  
'The stars with head sublime,'  
But scarce could see, as now we see,  
The man in Space and Time,  
So drew perchance a happier lot  
Than ours, who rhyme to-day.  
The fires that arch this dusky dot—  
Yon myriad-worlded way—  
The vast sun-clusters' gather'd blaze,  
World-isles in lonely skies,  
Whole heavens within themselves, amaze  
Our brief humanities ;  
And so does Earth ; for Homer's fame,  
Tho' carved in harder stone—  
The falling drop will make his name  
As mortal as my own.

IRENE.

No !

POET.

Let it live then—ay, till when?  
Earth passes, all is lost  
In what they prophesy, our wise men,  
Sun-flame or sunless frost,  
And deed and song alike are swept  
Away, and all in vain  
As far as man can see, except  
The man himself remain;  
And tho', in this lean age forlorn,  
Too many a voice may cry  
That man can have no after-morn,  
Not yet of these am I.  
The man remains, and whatsoe'er  
He wrought of good or brave  
Will mould him thro' the cycle-year.  
That dawns behind the grave.

---

And here the Singer for his Art  
Not all in vain may plead  
'The song that nerves a nation's heart,  
Is in itself a deed.'

## TO VIRGIL.

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF THE MANTUANS FOR  
THE NINETEENTH CENTENARY OF VIRGIL'S DEATH.

### I.

ROMAN VIRGIL, thou that singest  
    Ilion's lofty temples robed in fire,  
Ilion falling, Rome arising,  
    wars, and filial faith, and Dido's pyre ;

### II.

Landscape-lover, lord of language  
    more than he that sang the Works and Days,  
All the chosen coin of fancy  
    flashing out from many a golden phrase ;

### III.

Thou that singest wheat and woodland,  
    tilth and vineyard, hive and horse and herd ;

All the charm of all the Muses  
often flowering in a lonely word ;

## IV.

Poet of the happy Tityrus  
piping underneath his beechen bowers ;  
Poet of the poet-satyr  
whom the laughing shepherd bound with  
flowers ;

## V.

Chanter of the Pollio, glorying  
in the blissful years again to be,  
Summers of the snakeless meadow,  
unlaborious earth and oarless sea ;

## VI.

Thou that seëst Universal  
Nature moved by Universal Mind ;  
Thou majestic in thy sadness  
at the doubtful doom of human kind ;

## VII.

Light among the vanish'd ages ;  
star that gildest yet this phantom shore ;



Golden branch amid the shadows,  
kings and realms that pass to rise no more ;

## VIII.

Now thy Forum roars no longer,  
fallen every purple Cæsar's dome—  
Tho' thine ocean-roll of rhythm  
sound for ever of Imperial Rome—

## IX.

Now the Rome of slaves hath perish'd,  
and the Rome of freemen holds her place,  
I, from out the Northern Island  
sunder'd once from all the human race,

## X.

I salute thee, Mantovano,  
I that loved thee since my day began,  
Wielder of the stateliest measure  
ever moulded by the lips of man.

## THE DEAD PROPHET.

182—.

I.

DEAD !

And the Muses cried with a stormy cry  
‘Send them no more, for evermore.  
Let the people die.’

II.

Dead !

‘Is it *he* then brought so low?’  
And a careless people flock’d from the fields  
With a purse to pay for the show.

III.

Dead, who had served his time,  
Was one of the people’s kings,  
Had labour’d in lifting them out of slime,  
And showing them, souls have wings !

## IV.

Dumb on the winter heath he lay.  
His friends had stript him bare,  
And roll'd his nakedness everyway  
That all the crowd might stare.

## V.

A storm-worn signpost not to be read,  
And a tree with a moulder'd nest  
On its barkless bones, stood stark by the dead ;  
And behind him, low in the West,

## VI.

With shifting ladders of shadow and light,  
And blurr'd in colour and form,  
The sun hung over the gates of Night,  
And glared at a coming storm.

## VII.

Then glided a vulturous Beldam forth,  
That on dumb death had thriven ;  
They call'd her ' Reverence ' here upon earth,  
And ' The Curse of the Prophet ' in Heaven.

## VIII.

She knelt—‘We worship him’—all but wept—  
‘So great so noble was he!’  
She clear’d her sight, she arose, she swept  
The dust of earth from her knee.

## IX.

‘Great! for he spoke and the people heard,  
And his eloquence caught like a flame  
From zone to zone of the world, till his Word  
Had won him a noble name.

## X.

Noble! he sung, and the sweet sound ran  
Thro’ palace and cottage door,  
For he touch’d on the whole sad planet of man,  
The kings and the rich and the poor;

## XI.

And he sung not alone of an old sun set,  
But a sun coming up in his youth!  
Great and noble—O yes—but yet—  
For man is a lover of Truth,

## XII.

And bound to follow, wherever she go  
Stark-naked, and up or down,  
Thro' her high hill-passes of stainless snow,  
Or the foulest sewer of the town—

## XIII.

Noble and great—O ay—but then,  
Tho' a prophet should have his due,  
Was he noblier-fashion'd than other men?  
Shall we see to it, I and you?

## XIV.

For since he would sit on a Prophet's seat,  
As a lord of the Human soul,  
We needs must scan him from head to feet  
Were it but for a wart or a mole?

## XV.

His wife and his child stood by him in tears,  
But she—she push'd them aside.  
'Tho' a name may last for a thousand years,  
Yet a truth is a truth,' she cried.

## XVI.

And she that had haunted his pathway still,  
Had often truckled and cower'd  
When he rose in his wrath, and had yielded her will  
To the master, as overpower'd,

## XVII.

She tumbled his helpless corpse about.  
'Small blemish upon the skin !  
But I think we know what is fair without  
Is often as foul within.'

## XVIII.

She crouch'd, she tore him part from part,  
And out of his body she drew  
The red 'Blood-eagle'<sup>1</sup> of liver and heart ;  
She held them up to the view ;

## XIX.

She gabbled, as she groped in the dead,  
And all the people were pleased ;  
'See, what a little heart,' she said,  
'And the liver is half-diseased !'

<sup>1</sup> Old Viking term for lungs, liver, etc., when torn by the conqueror out of the body of the conquered.

xx.

She tore the Prophet after death,  
And the people paid her well.  
Lightnings flicker'd along the heath ;  
One shriek'd 'The fires of Hell !'

## EARLY SPRING.

### I.

ONCE more the Heavenly Power  
Makes all things new,  
And domes the red-plow'd hills  
With loving blue ;  
The blackbirds have their wills,  
The throistles too.

### II.

Opens a door in Heaven ;  
From skies of glass  
A Jacob's ladder falls  
On greening grass,  
And o'er the mountain-walls  
Young angels pass.

### III.

Before them fleets the shower,  
And burst the buds,



And shine the level lands,  
And flash the floods ;  
The stars are from their hands  
Flung thro' the woods,

## IV.

The woods with living airs  
How softly fann'd,  
Light airs from where the deep,  
All down the sand,  
Is breathing in his sleep,  
Heard by the land.

## V.

O follow, leaping blood,  
The season's lure !  
O heart, look down and up  
Serene, secure,  
Warm as the crocus cup,  
Like snowdrops, pure !

## VI.

Past, Future glimpse and fade  
Thro' some slight spell,

A gleam from yonder vale,  
Some far blue fell,  
And sympathies, how frail,  
In sound and smell !

## VII.

Till at thy chuckled note,  
Thou twinkling bird,  
The fairy fancies range,  
And, lightly stirr'd,  
Ring little bells of change  
From word to word.

## VIII.

For now the Heavenly Power  
Makes all things new,  
And thaws the cold, and fills  
The flower with dew ;  
The blackbirds have their wills,  
The poets too.

PREFATORY POEM TO MY BROTHER'S  
SONNETS.

*Midnight, June 30, 1879.*

I.

MIDNIGHT—in no midsummer tune  
The breakers lash the shores :  
The cuckoo of a joyless June  
Is calling out of doors :

And thou hast vanish'd from thine own  
To that which looks like rest,  
True brother, only to be known  
By those who love thee best.

II.

Midnight—and joyless June gone by,  
And from the deluged park

The cuckoo of a worse July  
Is calling thro' the dark :

But thou art silent underground,  
And o'er thee streams the rain,  
True poet, surely to be found  
When Truth is found again.

## III.

And, now to these unsummer'd skies  
The summer bird is still,  
Far off a phantom cuckoo cries  
From out a phantom hill ;

And thro' this midnight breaks the sun  
Of sixty years away,  
The light of days when life begun,  
The days that seem to-day,

When all my griefs were shared with thee,  
As all my hopes were thine—  
As all thou wert was one with me,  
May all thou art be mine !

‘FRATER AVE ATQUE VALE.’

Row us out from Desenzano, to your Sirmione row !  
So they row’d, and there we landed—‘O venusta  
Sirmio !’

There to me thro’ all the groves of olive in the summer  
glow,

There beneath the Roman ruin where the purple  
flowers grow,

Came that ‘Ave atque Vale’ of the Poet’s hopeless  
woe,

Tenderest of Roman poets nineteen-hundred years  
ago,

‘Frater Ave atque Vale’—as we wander’d to and fro  
Gazing at the Lydian laughter of the Garda Lake  
below

Sweet Catullus’s all-but-island, olive-silvery Sirmio !

## HELEN'S TOWER.<sup>1</sup>

HELEN'S TOWER, here I stand,  
Dominant over sea and land.  
Son's love built me, and I hold  
Mother's love in letter'd gold.  
Love is in and out of time,  
I am mortal stone and lime.  
Would my granite girth were strong  
As either love, to last as long !  
I should wear my crown entire  
To and thro' the Doomsday fire,  
And be found of angel eyes  
In earth's recurring Paradise.

<sup>1</sup> Written at the request of my friend, Lord Dufferin.

EPITAPH ON LORD STRATFORD DE  
REDCLIFFE.

IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

THOU third great Canning, stand among our best  
And noblest, now thy long day's work hath ceased,  
Here silent in our Minster of the West  
Who wert the voice of England in the East.

EPITAPH ON GENERAL GORDON.

IN THE GORDON BOYS' NATIONAL MEMORIAL  
HOME NEAR WOKING.

WARRIOR of God, man's friend, and tyrant's foe,  
Now somewhere dead far in the waste Soudan,  
Thou livest in all hearts, for all men know  
This earth has never borne a nobler man.



EPITAPH ON CAXTON.

IN ST. MARGARET'S, WESTMINSTER.

FIAT LUX (his motto).

THY prayer was 'Light—more Light -while Time  
shall last !'

Thou sawest a glory growing on the night,  
But not the shadows which that light would cast,  
Till shadows vanish in the Light of Light.

## TO THE DUKE OF ARGYLL.

O PATRIOT Statesman, be thou wise to know  
The limits of resistance, and the bounds  
Determining concession ; still be bold  
Not only to slight praise but suffer scorn ;  
And be thy heart a fortress to maintain  
The day against the moment, and the year  
Against the day ; thy voice, a music heard  
Thro' all the yells and counter-yells of feud  
And faction, and thy will, a power to make  
This ever-changing world of circumstance,  
In changing, chime with never-changing Law.

## HANDS ALL ROUND.

FIRST pledge our Queen this solemn night,

Then drink to England, every guest ;

That man's the best Cosmopolite

Who loves his native country best.

May freedom's oak for ever live

With stronger life from day to day ;

That man's the true Conservative

Who lops the moulder'd branch away.

Hands all round !

God the traitor's hope confound !

To this great cause of Freedom drink, my friends,

And the great name of England, round and round.

To all the loyal hearts who long

To keep our English Empire whole !

To all our noble sons, the strong

New England of the Southern Pole !

To England under Indian skies,

To those dark millions of her realm !

To Canada whom we love and prize,  
Whatever statesman hold the helm.

Hands all round !

God the traitor's hope confound !  
To this great name of England drink, my friends,  
And all her glorious empire, round and round.

To all our statesmen so they be  
True leaders of the land's desire !  
To both our Houses, may they see  
Beyond the borough and the shire !  
We sail'd wherever ship could sail,  
We founded many a mighty state ;  
Pray God our greatness may not fail  
Thro' craven fears of being great.

Hands all round !

God the traitor's hope confound !  
To this great cause of Freedom drink, my friends,  
And the great name of England, round and round.

## FREEDOM.

### I.

O THOU 'so fair in summers gone,  
While yet thy fresh and virgin soul  
Inform'd the pillar'd Parthenon,  
The glittering Capitol ;

### II.

So fair in southern sunshine bathed,  
But scarce of such majestic mien  
As here with forehead vapour-swathed  
In meadows ever green ;

### III.

For thou—when Athens reign'd and Rome,  
Thy glorious eyes were dimm'd with pain  
To mark in many a freeman's home  
The slave, the scourge, the chain ;

## IV.

O follower of the Vision, still  
In motion to the distant gleam,  
Howe'er blind force and brainless will  
May jar thy golden dream

## V.

Of Knowledge fusing class with class,  
Of civic Hate no more to be,  
Of Love to leaven all the mass,  
Till every Soul be free ;

## VI.

Who yet, like Nature, wouldst not mar .  
By changes all too fierce and fast  
This order of Her Human Star,  
This heritage of the past :

## VII.

O scorner of the party cry  
That wanders from the public good,  
Thou—when the nations rear on high  
Their idol smear'd with blood,

## VIII.

And when they roll their idol down—  
Of saner worship sanely proud ;  
Thou loather of the lawless crown  
As of the lawless crowd ;

## IX.

How long thine ever-growing mind  
Hath still'd the blast and strown the wave,  
Tho' some of late would raise a wind  
To sing thee to thy grave,

## X.

Men loud against all forms of power—  
Unfurnish'd brows, tempestuous tongues—  
Expecting all things in an hour—  
Brass mouths and iron lungs !

TO H.R.H. PRINCESS BEATRICE.

Two Suns of Love make day of human life,  
Which else with all its pains, and griefs, and deaths,  
Were utter darkness—one, the Sun of dawn  
That brightens thro' the Mother's tender eyes,  
And warms the child's awakening world—and one  
The later-rising Sun of spousal Love,  
Which from her household orbit draws the child  
To move in other spheres. The Mother weeps  
At that white funeral of the single life,  
Her maiden daughter's marriage ; and her tears  
Are half of pleasure, half of pain—the child  
Is happy—ev'n in leaving *her* ! but Thou,  
True daughter, whose all-faithful, filial eyes  
Have seen the loneliness of earthly thrones,  
Wilt neither quit the widow'd Crown, nor let  
This later light of Love have risen in vain,  
But moving thro' the Mother's home, between  
The two that love thee, lead a summer life,



Sway'd by each Love, and swaying to each Love,  
Like some conjectured planet in mid heaven  
Between two Suns, and drawing down from both  
The light and genial warmth of double day.

## THE FLEET.<sup>1</sup>

### I.

You, you, *if* you shall fail to understand  
What England is, and what her all-in-all,  
On you will come the curse of all the land,  
Should this old England fall  
Which Nelson left so great.

<sup>1</sup> The speaker said that 'he should like to be assured that other outlying portions of the Empire, the Crown colonies, and important coaling stations were being as promptly and as thoroughly fortified as the various capitals of the self-governing colonies. He was credibly informed this was not so. It was impossible, also, not to feel some degree of anxiety about the efficacy of present provision to defend and protect, by means of swift well-armed cruisers, the immense mercantile fleet of the Empire. A third source of anxiety, so far as the colonies were concerned, was the apparently insufficient provision for the rapid manufacture of armaments and their prompt despatch when ordered to their colonial destination. Hence the necessity for manufacturing appliances equal to the requirements, not of Great Britain alone, but of the whole Empire. But the keystone of the whole was the necessity for an overwhelmingly powerful fleet and efficient defence for all necessary coaling stations. This was as essential for the colonies as for Great

## II.

His isle, the mightiest Ocean-power on earth,  
Our own fair isle, the lord of every sea—  
Her fuller franchise—what would that be worth—  
Her ancient fame of Free—  
Were she . . . a fallen state?

## III.

Her dauntless army scatter'd, and so small,  
Her island-myrriads fed from alien lands—  
The fleet of England is her all-in-all;  
Her fleet is in your hands,  
And in her fleet her Fate.

Britain. It was the one condition for the continuance of the Empire. All that Continental Powers did with respect to armies England should effect with her navy. It was essentially a defensive force, and could be moved rapidly from point to point, but it should be equal to all that was expected from it. It was to strengthen the fleet that colonists would first readily tax themselves, because they realised how essential a powerful fleet was to the safety, not only of that extensive commerce sailing in every sea, but ultimately to the security of the distant portions of the Empire. Who could estimate the loss involved in even a brief period of disaster to the Imperial Navy? Any amount of money timely expended in preparation would be quite insignificant when compared with the possible calamity he had referred to.'—*Extract from Sir Graham Berry's Speech at the Colonial Institute, 9th November 1886.*

## IV.

You, you, that have the ordering of her fleet,  
If you should only compass her disgrace,  
When all men starve, the wild mob's million feet  
Will kick you from your place,  
But then too late, too late.

OPENING OF THE INDIAN AND  
COLONIAL EXHIBITION BY THE QUEEN.

*Written at the Request of the Prince of Wales.*

I.

WELCOME, welcome with one voice !  
In your welfare we rejoice,  
Sons and brothers that have sent,  
From isle and cape and continent,  
Produce of your field and flood,  
Mount and mine, and primal wood ;  
Works of subtle brain and hand,  
And splendours of the morning land,  
Gifts from every British zone ;  
          Britons, hold your own !

II.

May we find, as ages run,  
The mother featured in the son ;

And may yours for ever be  
That old strength and constancy  
Which has made your fathers great  
In our ancient island State,  
And wherever her flag fly,  
Glorying between sea and sky,  
Makes the might of Britain known ;  
Britons, hold your own !

## III.

Britain fought her sons of yore—  
Britain fail'd ; and never more,  
Careless of our growing kin,  
Shall we sin our fathers' sin,  
Men that in a narrower day—  
Unprophetic rulers they—  
Drove from out the mother's nest  
That young eagle of the West  
To forage for herself alone ;  
Britons, hold your own !

## IV.

Sharers of our glorious past,  
Brothers, must we part at last ?  
Shall we not thro' good and ill  
Cleave to one another still ?

Britain's myriad voices call,  
'Sons, be welded each and all,  
Into one imperial whole,  
One with Britain, heart and soul !  
One life, one flag, one fleet, one Throne !'  
Britons, hold your own !

## POETS AND THEIR BIBLIOGRAPHIES.

OLD poets foster'd under friendlier skies,  
Old Virgil who would write ten lines, they say,  
At dawn, and lavish all the golden day  
To make them wealthier in his readers' eyes ;  
And you, old popular Horace, you the wise  
Adviser of the nine-years-ponder'd lay,  
And you, that wear a wreath of sweeter bay,  
Catullus, whose dead songster never dies ;  
If, glancing downward on the kindly sphere  
That once had roll'd you round and round the Sun,  
You see your Art still shrined in human shelves,  
You should be jubilant that you flourish'd here  
Before the Love of Letters, overdone,  
Had swamp'd the sacred poets with themselves.









